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EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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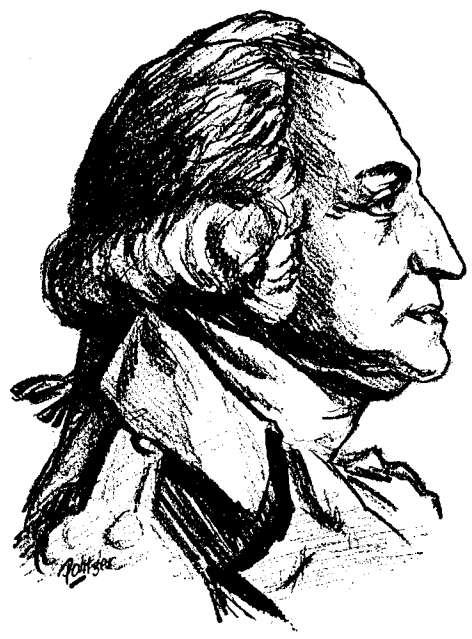

A drawing reproduced from the jacket design of "George Washington," by Shelby Little.

Washington à la Strachey

GEORGE WASHINGTON. By SHELBY LITTLE. New York: Minton, Balch & Co. 1929. $5.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

IT is a healthy fact that the career of Washington, once reserved to historical scholars, has now attracted a group of writers whose interests and associations are more purely literary. After all, the scholars have had a century and a quarter, and have failed to produce anything like a completely satisfactory life—failed not through lack of knowledge or expertness but of interpretive ability. It is but fair to give such authors as Mr. Rupert Hughes, Mr. W. E. Woodward, Mr. John Corbin, and Mrs. Little their chance. These writers have widely different intentions and methods, and Mr. Hughes, who has unearthed new facts of importance and proved himself a careful and zealous investigator, doubtless looks rather scornfully at Mr. Woodward's slapdash portraiture. But taken as a group, they seem to be bringing a spirit of fresh realism into the study of Washington, a questioning mood, an appetite for actualities, and a new literary zest and vigor.

Mrs. Little's inspiration is not much in doubt. She is an interested and talented amateur who has read Lytton Strachey's "Victoria" and Ludwig's "Napoleon," and has been seized with the desire to do for Washington what these writers did for their subjects. Her aim is not to add new facts, for she believes we have enough facts now, but to throw upon canvas a sharper delineation of Washington's excessively classicized features, and a more vivid presentation of his time. Her methods are those with which the recent mode in biography has familiarized us. That is, they include constant attention to the psychology of Washington, including both his mental and his emotional life; a constant mixture of trivial everyday facts (the heat, the roads, the color of a waistcoat) with momentous historical facts in order to give the latter a new lustre of reality; emphasis upon the pictorial, through first-hand glimpses of men and events from letters, diaries, and memoirs; and use of the historical present or its equivalent. This is not a scholar's biography, in the sense of representing first-hand research. It is not a critical biography, for it has notably few ideas, whether new or old. It is plain narrative and picturization, adroitly and vivaciously carried through nearly five hundred pages to give us a cleaner-cut and brighter impression of a great leader and his troubled era.

(*Continued on page* 753)

The New Humanists

BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

PERHAPS no civilized man of reflection looking upon his times whenever they may be has failed to echo Chaucer's angry cry, up, beast, out of thy stall, as he surveys bestial complacency and disregard of any ends, rational or irrational, beyond the meanest immediacy. And perhaps no citizen of the world has had better reason for distress than precisely today and in America. A century of progress has left us a middle-class civilization where quality is consistently sacrificed to quantity, and cheap comforts and cheap thinking are equally accessible. It has become almost incredible to us that society can be organized upon any basis but profit. For the old and often beautiful superstitions we have substituted a belief in the efficacy of applied science to make us wise and happy which is as grossly superstitious, yet, though disproved daily in the experience of our intimates, remains in arrogant self-evidence. The Thing is quite certainly regarded by the majority as more important than the Man, and never have leisure, thought, the sense of beauty, and even pure physical enjoyment been so subordinated to the business of stimulating material wants and creating the goods to satisfy them. We are committed as a nation—and we are trying to commit the world—to the thesis that riches and success are identical. We know better, but that is what our bodies believe, which is proved by the way in which we live. The standard of material comfort has been raised so high that it is difficult for the intellectual, the artist, or the craftsman to keep his place and get his share of the comfort provided by machines, without wasting his energies on pure profit making. Having conquered nature to the sound of factory wheels and auto horns, we breed less fine figures of men than the eighteenth century or the early Renaissance.

Spectacles like this of ours, as distressing, though with different evils to make the onlooker groan, have raised the Isaiahs, the Dantes, the Erasmuses of the past. Erasmus with his hopes for a reasonable world purged of the folly of violence and obscurantism would be a particularly good critic of the dull mechanic materialism which threatens to lower the vitality of our humanity. His humanism of a world made for rational man is the doctrine we lack, and it is not surprising that the new school of protestants against the mechanizing of America should have taken the name and called themselves humanists. They have united in a book, "Humanism and America,"* which is a forthright challenge to naturalism, materialism, mechanism, and all the other manifestations of a sub-rational society, and they have a doctrine, a creed, and a program. Such names as Irving Babbitt, Paul Elmer More, Frank Jewett Mather, Norman Foerster, T. S. Eliot among the contributors, promise scholarship, and high critical and ethical standards.

There is a spell in the very name of humanist, as of a revival of that intellectual crusade which in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries gave all too human nature once again the center of the stage. It is perhaps a dangerous spell and indeed not all who call upon the name of humanist will be saved or be capable of saving.

And therefore, if humanism is what this speed-dizzy, matter-sodden age needs, let us be highly critical of the brand that is offered. These new humanists assert nothing less than a willingness to save us all with our literary, artistic, and philosophic luggage. Their promises are large, their invective against all who disagree, heavy.

What is this new humanism, and how does it differ from that creative interest in the possibilities of mortal man which has been called humanism in the past? Professor Irving Babbitt, who is regarded by the editor, Norman Foerster, as a center and fount, defines his humanism as measure in everything, as order, as restraint. "Nothing too much" has indeed always been good humanism, and we can admit Mr. Babbitt's contention that it is one of the "laws unwritten in the heavens" which intuition discovers. Humanism, Mr. Babbitt further explains, moves upon the middle of the three levels of existence, nature—man—the divine. It is opposed to humanitarianism which, assuming perfectability, makes men into gods, and naturalism (or naturism) which makes the law for man and the law for thing identical. Humanism (he says) defies materialism with the literary realism that is built upon it, and deplores that escape from good reasoning into mere expansiveness of spirit which we call romance. The humanist, he adds, must put the will above the intellect, but this will is to be of the "higher immediacy," akin to God's will, and must control the "lower immediacy" of our desires. Thus the new humanism is committed to a complete dualism in which man and nature are violently opposed. Against the excesses of feeling or experiment which constitute modernism the humanist's will is set, and this will, in contradiction of determinism, is free. Down with nature. Let her be cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, she is mankind's enemy, is the new humanist's cry—an almost startling contradiction of the chief trends of recent thought with their emphasis upon the primitive, the emotional, and the complex of environment and the personality.

The other members of this humanist group accept Mr. Babbitt's definition, even though, with the exception of Mr. Foerster, who is more royalist than

* HUMANISM AND AMERICA. Edited by NORMAN FOERSTER. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1930. $3.50.

This Week

"Humanism and America."
Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY.

"America and England."
Reviewed by HENRY KITTREDGE NORTON.

"Modern Architecture."
Reviewed by FREDERICK J. WOODBRIDGE.

"Retreat."
Reviewed by BARTLET BREBNER.

"A Prophet and His Gods."
Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS.

"History of American Magazines."
Reviewed by JOHN BAKELESS.

"Collected Poems of W. H. Davies."
Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER.

Casanova.
Reviewed by ARTHUR LIVINGSTON.

Next Week, or Later

Cape Hatteras.
By HART CRANE.

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the king, they modify his application. It is a gospel they preach. Even though Paul Elmer More in the wisdom of accumulated years would be content to restore the reign of common sense in a modernism that is trying to escape from its stale naturalism by creating forms lower than nature provides, most of the others are content with nothing less than a reconstruction of the world along lines they approve —psychology is to be abolished, physics shown its place, sociology reformed out of its materialism, all aspirations toward human brotherhood and the progress of common man to be stamped out by a ruthless rationalism, and the machine age transformed into something more intellectually acceptable.

The negativeness of this program is rather appalling. It is a very porcupine hunched up against our familiar world. On the positive side here is assuredly what we, who before this sudden incandescence had been accustomed to call ourselves humanists, heartily believed in. We too have longed for a new sense of proportion. We too have deplored the energies of an era pouring unrestrained into the power plants of materialistic aims. We also have felt that progress worth having was a progress in the character of men and in happiness of living. We have regretted the substitution of quantity for quality, have denied determinism, and rejoiced when science reached its limits and left the mind free to speculate upon its own reality. And we also, like these new humanists, have invoked tradition, though not as a master, yet as a guide.

But Mr. Babbitt (and Mr. Foerster) is not content with a program of the world for man. He will erect his own tabernacle and exclude from it all skeptics, all realists, all romanticists, no matter what their attitude toward materialism. Out go all the humanitarianists, including, one would say from the definition, Jesus Christ and Shelley, as well as Woodrow Wilson and Rousseau. Out go all specialists, for they work upon the foolish theory that there is progress to be served. Out goes every scientist who proposes that his discoveries in measurement be utilized in thinking about the mind and

understand him rightly, their misguided hopes in humanity being blighted, their work took on the gloom of futility instead of the certainty in accomplishment of the humanist ideal. Out go Sherwood Anderson, Willa Cather, James Branch Cabell, Joseph Hergesheimer in favor of Dorothy Canfield Fisher because only the latter reaches ethical conclusions satisfactory to a humanist. Out goes everything which directly or indirectly, in any way whatsoever, implies or includes the fraction of an idea that there is more to be learned of the mystery of the universe than has been vouchsafed to us already in those laws unwritten in the heavens, the suggestion that by experiment with matter any true knowledge may be had of intellectual man, and the hope that by extensions of feeling man and man in a nature which interpenetrates them may come closer toward understanding.

There is indeed in these otherwise thoughtful and scholarly essays, a tone, a feeling, as of exclusion, of dogmatism, of self-righteousness which irks the sympathetic reader like a curtain shutting out the light, and makes him say with Cæsar, "I do not much dislike the matter, but the manner of his speech." In their certainties, their refusals, their distances from the life that is being lived, in the active dislike of that life in all its most energetic manifestations, there is something, strongest perhaps in Professor Elliot's discourse on pride, least in T. S. Eliot's striking plea for humanism in religion, that makes one wonder whether these propagandists are on all counts sure of admittance at the humanists' gate. For the good humanist practises "nothing too much," and to him nothing human is alien. Is it possible that if Rabelais and Erasmus were humanists, Professor Babbitt is not?

I leave to others more expert in metaphysics than I (or some of the writers of this book) the analysis of their philosophical dualism and gospel of the will. I wish to discuss a different but, so I think, even more important aspect of this new humanism. Neither philosophical depth nor logical soundness is essential for the success of a program, but it must have direct and vital connection with the life of its period. Without that it cannot succeed, and, in all probability, without that, no matter how logical, it cannot be right in any living sense.

The new humanists, so it seems to many of us, transfer to the austerities of science their animus against the aimless rush and rattle of our profit-seeking civilization which science made possible. They condemn and rightly the bestiality of mass civilization without admitting that the instruments of precision which made our mass prosperity possible may conceivably be of use in the reaction against its excesses. There is, as they are not willing to concede, something magnificent in our triumphant adjustments to the exigencies of nature. For them a skyscraper tower is only a dead geometry of steel raised by commerce for the gratification of greed. True—and yet it is beautiful.

For them psychology is an impudent pseudo-science, dealing ignorantly with functions which are the province of intuition and logic. Psychology has been naively presumptuous in the assumptions of philosophic truth based upon the mechanism of matter; and yet the ordered knowledge of man's behavior already enables us to check up intuition and reduce the subjective error in pure thinking.

For them—for Dean Louis T. More particularly—the mathematical analyses of matter beyond the atom provide a fantastic non-sense world of contradictions, and of no realty and no importance for thinking. Einstein is not a humanist. And yet the electrons do leap from radium and the only proof of the invalidity of determinism is the demonstration by the second law of thermodynamics that matter is not ultimately governed by the law of cause and effect.

For them, even for the excellent critical mind of Mr. Stanley P. Chase, the excess of experiment in art, literature, sculpture, music, has been due chiefly to the belief that the world is a meaningless flux in which reason is out of place and the artificial harmonies of art are more valid than attempted representation of a man and nature alike void of meaning. Such an idea, the bastard child of mechanical materialism, has doubtless sat in many an artist's mind, and all praise to whatever the sword that slays him. But the mistake of these—shall I say, closet —humanists is to assume that all experiment, all expansion of interest in life beyond their definitions, is symptom of disorder to be stamped out

the imagination in which the vital spirits of a period prevailingly run. This is not the supposedly democratic principle of the majority upon which so much modern error rests. It has nothing to do with quantity. Rather it is the quality of the age to which I refer, measured not merely in intensity but in excellence also, that excellence, which, as Mr. Paul Elmer More would say, I think, is not an absolute, but a proportion in which a lack of Sophoclean serenity may be compensated by intense imagination energetically displayed. The excellence of our day is not in the poetic drama, nor in tragedy (as Mr. Thompson makes clear in this book), nor in epic, nor in philosophy and ethics of new Platos and new Aristotles. To look for high achievement here is vain, to condemn us because of their lack is idle. Our quality of excellence has been found prevailingly in pure science where we have demonstrably transcended all earlier periods, as much of their art and literature has transcended ours. Our quality has been found in music which is conquering a new realm of harmony for ears as yet only half open, in art in triumphs of pure composition, in literature in a vast extension of the mediums of prose and poetry to take in the novel qualities of a society in which for the first time all manner of men look for their own representations in its pages.

Twist and interpret as you may, like it or like it not, the creative energy of this age has been strongest in those works of the mind where the kinship—I do not say the identity—of man and nature, especially primitive nature, and man and the machine has been most clearly recognized. The emotional values of what the humanists call the lower nature of man have not only been the destruction of much of our worser modern fiction, they have clearly been the distinction of much of the best of it. The "naturism" of Thomas Hardy which the humanists so deplore may or may not be correct philosophically but has certainly won esthetic eminence. No matter what its excesses, the stream of consciousness school of fiction, which is essentially a selection of incident based on the belief that whatever happens in the human mind is worthy of art, has attracted some of our strongest talents and has given us a new method of attempting imaginative truth.

To divorce oneself philosophically from all such endeavors and the creative spirit they represent is logically possible of course. All your works are works of darkness, says the blind Milton to the Restoration libertines. All that you believe I do not believe. And no one can deny the right of these humanists, or any others, to expel and execrate the "achievements" of this age whether in democracy, or in applied science, or in the art and literature that is influenced by them, as being based upon a fallacious conception of human need. It is a dangerous right to exercise, for the society proffered in place of our actual one, the Greece or France or Spain of the critic, is bloodless and at best a hypothesis. The permanent values which can be drawn from art, literature, and history may serve as a check upon the excess or the digressions of the present, but, as an absolute standard of living in the only moment of time which we actually know, are sure to be pallid because they are abstractions. There is a vitamin in contemporary expression, no matter how inferior, not present for us in Aristotle, Æschylus, or Pope.

It is not for the critic to choose where creativeness shall appear, and it is beyond his power to cause, though he may check it. If he dislikes his age he can ignore it, but with the same danger that the university critics of the Renaissance ran when they ignored the rough, expansive, ill-ordered, chaotic Elizabethan drama, using terms sometimes strangely like sentences of this book.

The trap into which those critics fell is still open. They preferred literature which conformed to their very sensible ideas of restraint, of balance, and of dignity, not noting that it was dead at birth. These critics of the new humanism, as is very evident in reading this book, have excellent ideas, but only the most pallid taste in the arts, such as they are, of their own age. They seek when they read, see, or hear, first of all agreement with their own categories, and approve or disapprove not of art but of ethics and propaganda. This accounts for the willingness of some of them to forego creativeness altogether and take refuge in the bosom of the classics or the church. But creativeness refuses to stop for them. It may be misguided, as with the

as with Joyce, perverse and
experimentalists, but if it is
as life, it is nourished on the

age which they rightly distrust, but are not, I think, right in despising. To attack the follies of the creative spirit is one thing, but to wipe it out from the imagination, to cancel it—that way lies sterility. And the psychology which the new humanists deplore has found a name for a civilization that takes its artistic satisfactions entirely in the past.

If there seems to be some lack in critical wisdom, a touch of the pharisee, in the new humanists, there are also seeming gaps in their logic. If the heart of humanism is a selective control of life, it is hard to see why a controlled romance may not be as valued an escape from mechanical living as the classic insistence upon pure reason which Mr. Babbitt favors. To say that romanticism must be fought because it means the release of primitive instincts and so is naturism, and that humanitarianism must be fought because it implies good in natural man and so is naturism, is to substitute categories for the far more subtle and elusive realities of experience.

The truth is that the dualism between the higher and the lower immediacy upon which all these critic-philosophers harp so much, is only a useful hypothesis representing, not certainty but the truth about man as our intuition often perceives it. It is a way, and a good way, of handling life and judging the foundations of art. But to make it into a divining rod and measuring stick is to imitate the mechanists who from Huxley on have jumped at a supposed physical-chemical union of man and nature, flesh and spirit, and built upon that material conception of life the philosophy which has misled so much modern art and modern religion.

Modern science, which these writers dismiss with little hearing, has certainly illumined the subtle relationships of the intellect or imagination of man with the instincts, the physical and chemical reactions, the pressures of environment, until even if we know little more of the mind as an entity, we are infinitely wiser as to some of the conditions governing its behavior. To talk of the "lower" and "higher" as if lower and higher were black and white seems a little naïve, especially in view of what science has uncovered in recent years. There is a lower and a higher, a "thing" and a "man," but to tear them apart and display them as ethical opposites is to reduce an interdependence of unsus-

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pected subtlety to the crude symbolism of a Sunday School story. Aristotle would certainly never have thus dogmatized over dualism while the means for the difficult study of the relations between the physical apparatus of the body and the mind itself were at hand and still but half employed.

Nor is it by any means certain that the march of physics beyond the world of sensible matter is not a presage of a new monistic hypothesis of life, if not of man, which may be as valuable for criticism as the humanist's dualism.

I, personally, am so deeply in sympathy with the desire of these new humanists to rescue man from his tools and lift human destiny from the dull and scarcely conscious materialism which hangs like soot over this phase of the industrial revolution, that I deplore the narrowness of their definitions, and quite refuse to give up the name of humanist. I am not sure that a reasonable humanitarianism is poison for the race. Those who have seen "Red Rust" will not be enthusiastic for a society quite freed from its taint. I am by no means convinced that expansive, experimental literature is all doomed because it has no firm ethical basis. If its basis had been firm, it might today never have become literature. What, I wonder, would Mr. Shaffer, who demolishes Dreiser not because he is a bad artist but because he is a bad philosopher—what would he do with Egyptian art, which is certainly not humanist according to his definition—demolish that also? Nor do I feel that Mr. Mather has told the whole story in art, although his fine taste, like Mr. More's, keeps him impeccably just in his examples. These new harmonies, these dabblings with the primitive, these reversions to pure rhythm, and violent escapes from the expected registration of the senses, are if you please, denials of proportion and affirmations of the untamed nature in man seeking to modify the processes of reason. But perhaps a completer humanism would try to profit by their discoveries, even as in literature writers have sharpened their eyes and enriched their technique by the methods of science.

Humanism, properly understood, is, I believe, the only antidote for the poison of mechanism which is making of our civilization one vast machine for production and consumption. But it must be humanism, not a cult, not a refusal of life as it is in favor of life as it is deduced from books. That life is out of control now is notorious, but it will never be brought back by cursing from a hill top. It is better to try to ride the machines than to pretend that they can be disinvented; wiser to guide a civilization than to oppose it utterly.

A true humanist will first of all prize what he can find of worth in his own times, remembering that no age was ever golden. He will be more eager to encounter the vitality of the creative spirit wherever and however it is manifested than to set up his categories, even though he will never confuse intensity with greatness or be content with mere impressionism. Well aware of what has been best in the past, he will meet the present with open eyes, holding his principles as a man holds a line of poetry in his mind, ready for the new word which will bring the verse to life.

Clio Still Lives

THE MISSING MUSE AND OTHER ESSAYS. By PHILIP GUEDALLA. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by AMY LOVEMAN

EPHEMERAL though these essays are in character they are worth the permanence of publication in book form if only for their constant crackle of wit. But Mr. Guedalla is historian and scholar as well as brilliant epigrammatist and stylist; back of his coruscating epithet are knowledge and the reconstructive imagination, and woven into the play of his cleverness, even in articles so slight as these, is a wealth of allusion and instance that lends them substance.

"The Missing Muse" is a collection of fugitive sketches, a paper on history wherein Mr. Guedalla disproves his own contention that Clio "has vanished from the haunts of men—of English-speaking men, that is to say"; a "period piece" in which, recalling such faded but once familiar names as Dowson, Crackanthorpe, and Marzials he bursts out: "lie lightly on them, dust; for lying lightly was their *forte*"; and another in which he interjects: "We are, it seems, an Age of Pleasure, a period in which freedom slowly broadens down from stimulant to stimulant"; a study of "Mr. Belloc: A Panorama"; confessions of personal likes and interests, book reviews, dramatic criticisms, general comment on life and literature. All of them are brief, all of them are sparkling, none of them is without its kernel of pertinent commentary or suggestive analysis. Entirely unimportant, they are entirely delightful.

A Balance Sheet

AMERICA AND ENGLAND. By NICHOLAS ROOSEVELT. New York: Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith. 1930. $3.

Reviewed by HENRY KITTREDGE NORTON

MR. ROOSEVELT'S concise essay is by far the most valuable assistant to understanding of the proceedings of the London Conference on naval disarmament that has come to the notice of this reviewer. Its lucid presentation of facts and figures brings home a number of generally accepted facts and disposes of a number of misapprehensions.

Mr. Roosevelt is not content with the vague statements that the United States has supplanted Great Britain as the most puissant of world powers. He brings the pertinent facts into exact focus and enables us to make a much more accurate estimate of the extent to which there has been a transition of world power from one side of the Atlantic to the other. He even finds it possible to construct an international balance sheet in which the various items of advantage and disadvantage for both countries are entered under such captions as geography, resources, production, trade, finance, shipping, defense, etc. The text of the book is for the most part an exposition of the facts here set forth. A careful study of Mr. Roosevelt's balance sheet will do much for a better understanding of the present business of American diplomacy, at least so far as our relations with England are concerned.

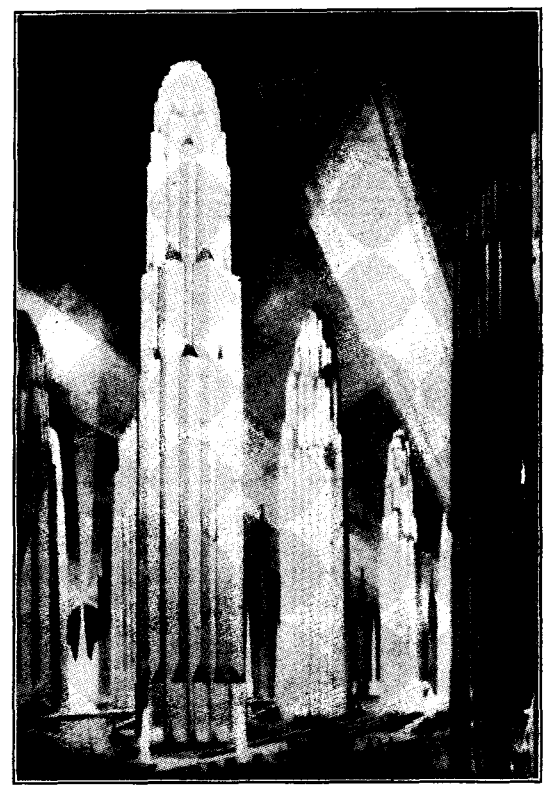

Illustration from "The Metropolis of Tomorrow," by Hugh Ferris.

Too much can hardly be said in praise of the work in general. Emotion has been rigidly excluded and the actual facts stressed. Yet there is no suggestion of hardness or militarism. The author is a firm believer in the desirability of Anglo-American coöperation. He insists, however, that this coöperation will be more easily attained and will be more lasting if it is based upon actualities and not upon sentimentalities.

It may seem trifling to seek for errors in a work of such uniform merit. Yet the very spirit of Mr. Roosevelt's book, its expressed desire to remove "some of the misapprehensions of Englishmen and Americans," invites the query as to whether Mr. Roosevelt has not given additional currency to one or two common misapprehensions.

He gives his assent, for example, to the idea so widely accepted in this country that "The American naval program, sponsored by Woodrow Wilson in 1916, would, if carried out, give the United States the most powerful fleet in the world." This might have been true immediately after the Armistice but it was not true at the time of the Washington Conference. In the interim both Great Britain and Japan had adopted construction programs which materially altered the situation. The British at least were satisfied that their program would give them an appreciable measure of superiority in naval power. The nature and design of the proposed Japanese ships was so different from ours that it is more difficult to estimate their relative power, but in many respects, including the important item of the size of guns, the Japanese vessels would have been superior. There is no question but that the economic resources of the United States would have enabled us to outbuild the other countries in 1921 as they would in 1930. But the program which we curtailed at the Washington Conference would not alone have given us "the most powerful fleet in the world."

One of Mr. Roosevelt's main points is that the doctrine of "the command of the sea" is the inevitable contention of the dominant sea power while the doctrine of "the freedom of the seas" is the natural contention of the weaker nations. This is undoubtedly true. But in adducing his evidence in support of the statement the author apparently acquiesces in the idea that the United States, after having vehemently supported the doctrine of the freedom of the seas while it was a neutral in the Great War, wholly abandoned that doctrine when it became a belligerent.

Such records as are available do not lead to this conclusion. The United States did exercise the "right of angary" in taking over some Dutch vessels which were in our harbors at the time we entered the war. The United States navy did lay floating mines in the North Sea. Both of these actions were inconsistent with the principle of the freedom of the seas, but neither of them was directly involved in that doctrine. As to the doctrine itself, instructions to the American navy when it entered the war were to "fight the enemy, not neutrals." And there is no record of any neutral ship having been seized and brought into port or otherwise interfered with by an American war vessel.

We strictly regulated our own trade with neutrals but we were entirely within our rights as belligerents in so doing. Until further evidence comes to light we would appear to be forced to the conclusion, not that the United States abandoned the doctrine of the freedom of the seas when she entered the war, but that we deliberately and designedly went as far as we could in the exercise of our belligerent power *without* violating the principle of that doctrine.

Except for these two possible items, neither of which is of primary importance nor militates seriously against his main thesis, Mr. Roosevelt has accurately diagramed the facts, the issues, and the ties which hold apart and bind together the two great Anglo-Saxon nations.

The City of the Future

MODERN ARCHITECTURE. By HENRY RUSSELL HITCHCOCK, JR., New York: Brewer & Warren (Payson & Clarke). 1929. $5.

THE CITY OF TO-MORROW AND ITS PLANNING. By LE CORBUSIER. The same.

THE METROPOLIS OF TO-MORROW. By HUGH FERRIS. New York: Ives Washburn. 1929. $7.50.

Reviewed by FREDERICK J. WOODBRIDGE

A COMPREHENSIVE book on modern architecture would be welcomed by all who have an interest in the progressive artistic efforts of this generation. The theories and examples of the new and original designs advanced throughout the western world are accessible only in specialized volumes or the various, more or less professional, contemporary journals. From such scattered material it is difficult for either layman or architect to obtain an inclusive view of the "modern" movement. Three different views of it are given in the books under consideration. Mr. Ferris sets forth in vivid pictures problems of urban architecture and suggestions for solving them, all in terms easily grasped. Le Corbusier vigorously denounces the hap-hazard, short-sighted growth of cities and offers a radical plan of his own, which rides roughshod over reality and human nature. Mr. Hitchcock's "Modern Architecture" at first glance appears to be just the comprehensive book we want.

Indeed it is even more ambitious, because it sets out to establish a foundation for a new approach to architecture as far back as the late Middle Ages, and then to show that from the year 1750, the change of attitude became more and more pronounced, until now, with a certain group of designers, it is altogether dominant. It is not clear what this new approach and change of attitude are. At the beginning this appears to have been a shift from a straightforward interest in composition to sentimentality,—a romantic love of the "sublime" and the "pictures-

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que,"—and at the end from a progressive modification of tradition to extreme pioneering, excluding not only traditional design but familiar materials as well. As is so often the case in advancing a general theory, particularly one that must embrace many ages and lands, numerous cases are encountered that do not fit the hypotheses, and these must either be overlooked or regarded as unimportant. Mr. Hitchcock does just this. In dealing with the past he chooses as significant only such examples as are convenient. Frequently these are what are generally conceded to be outstanding in their time, but just as frequently they are practically unknown except to specialized scholarship. Thus Mr. Hitchcock's theory becomes little more than a personal opinion, and the value of his book, as an authoritative document, suffers greatly.

For instance, the "Antiquities of Athens" of Stuart and Revett and the consequent Greek Revival, the work of Thomas Jefferson and the resulting early federal achitecture of America are made of only secondary importance, because they do not keep in step with this particular parade, despite the fact that they were undeniably the dominant movements of their time. The classicism of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is completely submerged in a stream of "Romanticism." Even to Sir John Soane is attributed a "Bœotian" manner, apparently to be distinguished from his interest in Greek refinement.

The selective process is even more conspicuous when it comes to more recent architecture. In fact the bulk of twentieth century work, except in Germany, Holland, and Scandinavia, is completely ruled out, so that Mr. Hitchcock's book becomes very specialized indeed. In the last chapters it actually considers only a certain type of building constructed exclusively of ferro-concrete and glass.

The developments leading up to this ferro-concrete experimentation are greatly confused in the mind of the reader by the extraordinary terminology and labels for style-phases, such as, Renaissance-Renaissance, Neo-Baroque, Neo-Rococo, Neo-Gingerbread, Neo-Renaissance, the New Tradition, the New Pioneers. Sentences like, "It is troubadour rather than Bœotian," mean very little without better illustration, both literary and pictorial. To say, "The immense apartment house at 24 rue Linné, another . . . at 21 Place Saint-Georges, another . . . at 34 rue Henrie-Monier, and two more at the corner of the boulevard Malesherbes and the rue de l'Arcade are characteristic," without giving either descriptions or pictures of any of them does not convey much idea of what the author is talking about to one who does not know his Paris extremely well.

A less superficial scholarship could have produced a discussion not dependent on a wealth of pictures and found the English equivalent for the many phrases in French and Latin. To be sure, in his bibliographical note, Mr. Hitchcock excuses his poverty of illustration by referring to authors who have been more generous. One, at least, Platz in "Die Baukunst der Neuesten Zeit," gives a very complete album of modern German work and might have served as an example to follow. As it is the book is of little or no real use either to the architect or layman.

A yet more ambitious undertaking is Le Corbusier's "City of To-morrow," for it attempts to solve one of the most vexing problems of today, not only from an architectural, but also from an economic and sociological viewpoint. The author, whose real name is Charles-Edouard Jeanneret, like Mr. Hitchcock, starts with a historical resumé, and like him makes it confusing. This time, however, it is not from an over-elaborate technical terminology, but from an extremely incoherent and contentious manner of writing. Le Corbusier has the air of expecting to be contradicted at every sentence. His axiomatic and epigrammatic style would not be a fault if his axioms were always obviously true, and if his epigrams made sense. "Immense industrial undertakings do not need great men," and "The curve is ruinous, difficult, and dangerous," are examples. Some unintelligibilities in the text may be attributed to bad translation but others cannot: for instance, "vertical forms based on pure prisms. A Hellenism unknown to the Gothic" appended to a sketch of the base of a Turkish minaret labelled "Stamboul."

None-the-less, underneath all the confusion and nonsense lie some fundamentally sound facts and principles. Cities have in the main grown casually and have far outgrown their provision for traffic. No city was ever planned with a view to accommodating the motor car, the phenomenal rise of which was entirely unanticipated, or to transporting to and from business the vast populations which have also increased with alarming rapidity in recent years. The results we see about us every day, apparently growing worse and worse. Le Corbusier vehemently insists, and rightly, that no half-way measures will suffice. Any adequate solution must be radical, far-seeing, and broad in scope, and not merely architectural, but sound economically and sociologically as well.

So far we must agree with him, and most people will find the ends at which he professes to aim desirable. But the difficulties appear when he outlines his solution. He proposes to house his people either in cellular apartments or, for those better off, in apartment houses arranged like a Greek fret, running through gardens. All the apartments are identical, have plenty of daylight, excellent sanitation, and no charm. Although they are supposedly surrounded by gardens and playing fields, they are equipped with their own hanging terraces and suggest an up-to-date sanitorium. A completely communistic society would doubtless revel in such abodes, but ordinary humanity has scarcely progressed so far.

Evidently the economics of this future city are equally advanced, for they can have nothing to do with real estate men. Unfortunately the chapter on finance was not written by an economist, as le Corbusier says he had intended, but by himself, and so becomes more of a hope than a reasonable expectation. Somehow owners of property are to be persuaded to build on but fifteen per cent of their land in residential quarters and only five per cent in the business district. Delightful as the resulting parks would be, there is no compensation but their enjoyment offered in the former sections, and buildings sixty stories high are intended to yield the required revenue in the latter. The imagination might conceive this to be possible in Paris, where land values are not yet fantastic, but it is utterly out of the question in New York. The scheme of handling traffic on wide avenues and several different levels, with a minimum of intersections has, on the other hand, much to commend it.

Even if "the city of tomorrow" were practicable it would be so stereotyped and monotonous as to be very depressing architecturally. Le Corbusier's designs do not spur the imagination or offer any features either pleasurable or inspiring, except cleanliness and mere length and height. Furthermore, his illustrations, although more profuse than Mr. Hitchcock's, are almost exclusively very rough and badly drawn pen sketches, or cold stiff diagrams.

Whereas "The City of Tomorrow" should produce discussion, "The Metropolis of Tomorrow" should furnish inspiration. In his dedication Mr. Ferris clearly states his purpose: "To those men who, as Commissioners of numerous American municipalities are laboring upon the economic, legal, social, and engineering aspects of City Planning, this book, —which aspires to add a visual element to the endeavor,—is respectfully inscribed." This purpose he has accomplished with gratifyig skill. There is in his volume none of the dogmatic and controversial spirit of the other two books. It does not attempt to prophesy or to dictate: it does aim to visualize existing problems and to kindle the imagination. The reading matter is little more than a running comment explaining or suggesting the connotations of the beautiful illustrations.

Mr. Hitchcock, who admires le Corbusier greatly, dismisses Hugh Ferris with the accusation that he ignores the question of scale, the observer's viewpoint, and the related development of city planning. It is difficult to discover the grounds for this indictment in Mr. Ferris's book. To be sure, he does not show every detail, or emphasize each window. Thus he makes his drawings of existing buildings much handsomer than the buildings themselves; but he is interested in design and composition on a grand scale, a scale eminently suited to the massive architecture of industry and business. If architects would only make their buildings look more like Mr. Ferris's drawings, they would be much more successful. Neither the observer nor the city plan are neglected, but are cared for to a degree not found in existing structures. Huge mountains of skyscrapers are envisioned, every aspect of which offers something to inspire the beholder, and which are shaped furthermore, so as to give him a chance to see them. They are also related to each other in a formal and monumental fashion with adequate communication, light, and air between them. In fact at least one picture serves as a warning against the unbridled erection of juxtaposed immensities.

But "The Metropolis of Tomorrow" is not a text-book on city planning. It is a picture book with illustrations that clarify the task of modern architecture. Hugh Ferris is probably excelled by no draughtsman practising today in indication, a sense of three dimensions, and monumental imagination. He deals with composition in mass and line, free from the preconceived dogmas of esthetics. He shows us the mountain, not each tree, stone, or waterfall on its slopes. Thus his designs are inspiring and awesome, perhaps too grand for immediate realization, but surely pointing the direction for our striving.

A Chaplain at the Front

RETREAT: A NOVEL OF 1918. By C. R. BENSTEAD. New York: The Century Co. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by BARTLET BREBNER
Columbia University

IN the course of the novel in which he attempts a unified picture of England and the war, Mr. Tomlinson remarks that in truth there were almost as many wars as there were men engaged in the one Great War. The huge crop of literature concerning it is eloquent testimony to the truth of the statement and it would be a mistake to allow what threatens at present to be a surfeit of war books to obscure the merits of descriptions of these individual wars. Lt.-Commander Benstead has chosen an easily dramatic one for his book, that of a middle-aged chaplain driven by conscience from an appreciative and tranquil Cambridgeshire village to join a brigade of heavy artillery on the very eve of the great March offensive and the retreat of the British Fifth Army. Under the physical strain and still more under the mental torture of living for two months with men quite indifferent to an indifferent God he progresses swiftly to breakdown and insanity.

It is perhaps to be expected from an experienced soldier who was not a chaplain that the better part of the book is the description of the retreat and of how a variety of men behaved in it. For instance, anger at cheap, safe politicians, insistent scraps of military history, and tired, caustic comment on the behavior of the French, ring distinctly more true than description of the stages of the Patre's breakdown. The horror, the humor, the profanity, and obscenity which were the ordinary channels of relief, the bestiality, and the amoral decency of officers and men are caught to the life. The dialogue, epithets, and oaths are extraordinarily convincing. At last the pervading chloride of lime of any British front has been recalled.

The dumb, oppressed priest lives for a moment in typical gunners' language as "a lump of death warmed up." Similarly only a gunner could write so accurately and feelingly of what it is like to recognize that you are standing in the "fifty per cent zone" of an enemy battery. One even catches the gunners' instinctive recognition of the risks and chances which depend on whether the shelling is by battery, or single piece, or by howitzer, or high velocity gun. Finally the scorn of men who fought siege artillery like machine guns, for their auxiliary services which deserted them in time of stress, is as clear-cut and insistent as that of infantry-men for army service corps.

The fight and retreat of the Fifth Army threatens to become typical of the whole war on the Western Front for British audiences. Those who read this, the best account of it thus far, should not forget that infantry as well as gunners fought it and that if it demanded valor of a high order, perhaps an even more dehumanizing strain was that borne by the men who endured for months such hammering as went on in the Salient at Ypres.

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Two Biblical Tales

A PROPHET AND HIS GOD. By E. L. GRANT WATSON. New York: Horace Liveright. 1930. $3.

JUDGE AND FOOL. By ALTALENA (VLADIMIR JABOTINSKY). Translated from the German by CYRUS BROOKS. The same. $2.50.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

IT is not unnatural even in this day of growing rationalism that Biblical figures should make appealing material to peoples whose cultural backgrounds, whatever may be their religious beliefs, are Biblical. In that tradition few figures make greater appeal to the imagination than the Moses who led God's chosen people out of exile, and the Sampson who was the strong man of Dan. Now both of them, through imagination and through research enlivened with poetic feeling, are made figures of life in contemporary literature. We take from England E. L. Grant Watson's story of Moses in "A Prophet and His God." From Germany and the pen of Vladimir Jabotinsky "Judge and Fool" comes to us, telling of that Sampson whose story was strength in the Lord and weakness in the arms of strange women. Neither of these books is written in the conservative Christian or Jewish tradition but both are illuminating in their recreation of the cultures and times of their heroes, whether these heroes be creatures of myth or figures in the divinely truthful story of the chosen people of the one true God.

Both Mr. Grant Watson, whose tradition is that of English Christianity, and Herr Jabotinsky, whose background is Judaic, follow fairly closely the narratives of their heroes as given in the Bible. Mr. Grant Watson tells his story in a more reverent frame of mind than does Herr Jabotinsky. It is true that in the Moses there is often a rationalization of the miraculous, as in the treatment of the passage of the Israelites across the Red Sea upon dry land, but often, too, the supernatural is treated and accepted quite frankly as the supernatural. Herr Jabotinsky is definitely and wholly rationalistic. He takes the motley religions of the peoples of Dan and Philistia as decorations for his picture. Even Jehovah is a mere figure, all but lost in the multiplicity of gods. For the miracles which Jehovah wrought in the life of Sampson, Herr Jabotinsky has only irony. Particularly he gives ironical treatment to the Biblical tale that Sampson's mother was accosted by an angel from the Lord at the time of her son's conception.

* * *

"Judge and Fool" makes much of the contrast in Sampson that he could be both a roistering outlaw in Philistia and a wise, if sometimes whimsical, judge in Dan. Around this divided life, the author builds a colorful and dramatic narrative. In his book he diverges from the main points of the Biblical story only enough to make the fateful Delilah one who loved Sampson from his youth. Spurned by him then, she comes to his life again in maturity, colors it with passion, and betrays him because he could never give her love equal to the flame her dead sister won from him when all three were young. Herr Jabotinsky's novel which must be set down as fiction is in reality the historical truth of the work. With painstaking care, after obviously extensive research, he has recreated the life of Sampson's time in grim Dan and gay Philistia. In a brilliant way he weaves the product of this research into his story so that it adds tremendously to the reality of the picture without ever intruding, as is often the case in the use of such material, as pure scholarship heavily cluttering the stage set for drama.

Mr. Grant Watson's "A Prophet and His God" is a very different type of book. It makes no effort for the dramatic and story qualities of the Sampson novel. Instead, while admitting the purely mythological and traditional accounts upon which it is based, it is set up as "a true history of the spirit of the man." Thus in a rather strange way the book is biography. Actually it is a poetic reinterpretation of the orthodox chronicle of Moses and the wanderings under his leadership of a whole race. The aim of the author is to give reality to the struggles of a great man with his own people; the hero is moved by impulses of nationalism, by vision and fanaticism, while his people are moved, as all peoples are, by less magnificent but more personal things like hunger and cowardice and desire for peace and comfort. There is a universal quality about this work. Moses is made a living man but at the same time he becomes less the conventional figure of Moses and more the universal figure of greatness, whipping his less vigorous countrymen on towards a vision to which their eyes are blind. The nation which follows Moses with bickerings and mutiny and little faith becomes no longer Israel but the blind masses of all the earth.

In both books there is much beautiful writing and in both there are structural flaws which, however, must be classified as petty rather than grand crimes. Mr. Grant Watson in attempting to write his interpretation of Moses within fairly brief compass has made all too frequent use of the device of presenting past material by moving backward through the recollections and speculations of his actors. Herr Jabotinsky sins by suddenly changing his attitude as story teller when he comes to the final climax of his book. From a very effective third person attitude, he turns to a narrative in the first person told by a new character introduced at the last purely for the purpose of story telling. But these flaws may be forgotten in the beauty of the books. Mr. Grant Watson has a true sense of poetry in the handling of his prose. Herr Jabotinsky's book comes to us in a fine translation by Cyrus Brooks. Both writers have taken proper advantage of the poetic Eastern qualities in the stories of their heroes. In "A Prophet and His God" there is that sense of a people singing in exile, a song set between groan and wail, the bitter lament of baffled men on barren lands. There is the same quality of Oriental poverty and suffering among the people of Dan in "Judge and Fool," and there is here, too, the barbaric splendor of such an Eastern people as the Philistines who could build magnificence above a bloody slavery.

Washington à la Strachey

(*Continued from page* 749)

Accepted on this basis, it is a book well worth writing and having. Mrs. Little has done her work well, with less literary posturing than most followers of Strachey and Maurois use, with a refreshing avoidance of irony, and with a conscientious desire to make her work accurate and thorough. We do not have to turn to her long bibliography to see that she has made good use of the vast printed literature of the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary periods; not only that, but she has used the work of the latest and most critical scholars, the men like Drs. Schlesinger, Beard, and Van Tyne, with excellent judgment. She has a distinct gift for weaving many threads into a simple and strong narrative strand. Particularly in the original writings of all the chief participants, she follows with a broad outlook the confused events of the Revolution in its different theatres, the still more confused welter of political and financial affairs under the Confederation, and the puzzling intrigues of Washington's two administrations. It is no easy task to make a clear, accurate story of all this, and Mrs. Little's tale is not only clear, but is often absorbing. Here and there a slip betrays the fact that she is a historical novice, but the slips are few and seldom important. Best of all, she has a decided talent for the spirited, quick-eyed, and shrewd presentation of day-by-day events. She does not use Klieg lights and avoids the fallacy of rushing from one dramatic juncture to another.

While Mrs. Little's merits are her own, the main faults of the book are the faults of her method. She has undertaken to exhibit to us Washington's psychology, and for this, over long stretches of his life, there is very little convincing data. What would we not give to know what he really thought of Dinwiddie, Braddock, and the colonial militia, of Hancock and Congressional debating, of religion and money, of Cornwallis and Gates, of marriage and land, of glory, agriculture, and the placid partner of his private life, Martha Washington! He would have thought our curiosity unseemly. It is all too evident that while Mrs. Little documents much of her text with care, she is often at the necessity of inventing her psychology. Washington "could not understand his luck" when Howe moved on Philadelphia instead of the upper Hudson; possibly, but probably he wondered rather whether it was good luck or bad luck. He was "stunned" when Lee was taken prisoner by the British; but it took more than that to stun Washington. At Mount Vernon in 1788 he "went dully about his duties"; was Mount Vernon ever dull for a moment to Washington? Sometimes Mrs. Little is self-contradictory. On page 370 Washington, now President in New York, "is bored"; "the weekly state dinners, at which the President sat in the middle of the table across from Mrs. Washington, with figurines and artificial flowers between them, had become as irksome as they were inevitable." But on page 373 the President in New York "was almost enjoying himself. In the mornings he rode on horseback or walked around the Battery, sometimes with the two children, for exercise. On his way home he paid informal calls. Sometimes he stopped at Richmond Hill, and chatted with John Adams, whom he found flustered, difficult, and Mrs. Adams, who was sure to be natural and charming."

Allied with this necessity of providing psychology where no known psychology exists, there is the temptation—under Mrs. Little's method—of projecting the reader back into the atmosphere of the time by methods which are occasionally a bit crude. For example, the author is rightly anxious to impress upon us the fact that in the seventeen-fifties Franklin was no world-famous figure. She takes us into Braddock's camp at Frederick, Md. "The day before," she writes, "a large man with protruding forehead and twinkling eyes, whose name the General thought was Franklin, had been there and promised to procure horses and wagons." This is overdoing it. Braddock was never in any confusion as to the identity or importance of Benjamin Franklin, the Deputy Postmaster-General, the chief representative of Pennsylvania and Delaware, who rode to his army well-announced and accompanied by the governors of New York and Massachusetts. A similar instance occurs later in the book. Mrs. Little describes Washington addressing the Constitutional Convention "in his slightly hollow, curiously weak voice." This is vivid, but it is vividness at the expense of truth, for there is direct and ample evidence from Washington's contemporaries that his voice was deep and full though sometimes low. One rather objects to Mrs. Little's pseudo-casual way of bringing in important persons. In New York in 1776 "General Sullivan took occasion to introduce a handsome boy with remarkably rosy cheeks and Washington thought he caught the name Hamilton." We may be sure Hamilton saw he caught the name aright—and Washington had previously heard of Hamilton, anyhow. We rather object to her pseudo-casual way of mentioning some important events. Jefferson's Declaration of Independence, she writes, "was read from a platform on the Statehouse, while a few dozen people stood in the street below and seemed to wonder vaguely what it was all about." This misrepresents the tense atmosphere in Philadelphia, a city rent asunder by party strife, where the very children knew what it was all about.

But for the sake of Mrs. Little's clear, vivid, and on the whole truthful work, we can forgive these defects. She does not succeed in her chief aim—the object of making Washington seem to live, and bringing him as a breathing human being before the reader; but then, no other biographer has done it either. The nearest approach is in P. L. Ford's "Real George Washington," which is not a biography at all. She does succeed in telling the story of his life in an interesting, well-planned, and realistic fashion, with a multitude of touches which make the daily life of that era, and many of its ideas, prejudices, and habits of thought, seem remarkably distinct. It is a book which can be heartily commended to the general reader, which fills a real if not highly important gap in the shelf of books devoted to Washington, and from which even the well-read student may gain a great deal.

A Berlin dispatch to the London *Observer* says: "Gordon Craig's Hamlet," which, if the pictures had not been so integral a part of the text, would have been "Gerhart Hauptmann's Hamlet," is now on view at the Gallery Flechtheim. It would have been "Maurice Browne's Hamlet" if the plans for bringing a proposed Weimar production to London had materialized, or if, which seemed more feasible to Germans, an English company had performed the drama as Germany now finally visualizes it in this monumental edition.

To the world at large this very magnificent tribute to Shakespeare's genius brought about by the collaboration of Gordon Craig as illustrator and Hauptmann as translator, will be known as "Kessler's Hamlet." For the most romantic figure in Germany to-day, Count Kessler, pacifist, visionary, and patron of the arts—who has the face and figure of a medieval knight, but whose only armor is a Goethe-like serenity—conceived this "Hamlet" as far back as 1912. He intended it as the crowning glory of his particular hobby, the famous private press at Weimar.

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American Periodicals

A HISTORY OF AMERICAN MAGAZINES. 1741-1850. By FRANK LUTHER MOTT. New York: D. Appelton & Co. 1930. $10.

Reviewed by JOHN BAKELESS
Department of Journalism, New York University

IT is difficult to overestimate the value of Professor Frank Luther Mott's new "History of American Magazines" from 1741 to 1850. To have written the first scholarly, careful, and exhaustive book on an important phase of American intellectual life which has been hitherto totally untouched—save by two books, one wretchedly inadequate and the other pretending to be no more than a mere sketch—is a sufficient claim to gratitude. To have made so solid a work—necessarily ballasted as it is with a vast mass of fact and with innumerable notes and bibliographical details—at the same time an interesting and readable book is little short of black magic. And to have made the history of American magazines include fascinating sidelights on America's political, social, and literary history is to incline a reviewer to the most exaggerated vocabulary of the most shameless literary adulator.

But one dares not quite do this, after reading Professor Mott's own exposition of the early start of literary log-rolling on this continent, and his account of early "puffery" in the American press—described by an author-editor of 1845 as "a besetting sin of our literature." It is sufficient to say that though Professor Mott's is probably to be regarded as the first rather than the final history of the magazine in America, and though it is primarily informative rather than interpretative, there can be no doubt whatever that it will be a permanent landmark in the history of American journalism, especially if his promised second volume attains the high level of his first.

So thorough is Professor Mott's research, and so painstakingly clear is his tabulation of what he has found, that his book serves not only as a history of the American magazine press of the period, in general, but almost as an encyclopedia of American publishing in its first century.

* * *

The difficulties which the author faced in producing such a book were very great. The field with which he chose to deal has been inexplicably neglected, both by journalists and by historians. To gather material first hand meant the nearly endless examination of old magazine files,—a task whose magnitude one may judge by the fact that a single American magazine, by no means the oldest, is by this time "piling up well toward a second hundred million words." The magazine historian is therefore tempted either to drown his narrative under a flood of insignificant details, or else to write so sketchily that his book ceases to be history. Professor Mott has very neatly solved this problem by splitting each main division into two sections. First comes a running account of the period, the founding of new magazines, the careers of editors, and descriptions of their methods, the relation of magazines to social conditions, the rise of new authors, changes in popular taste, and the relation of all these to the political history of the time. Then, in each division, follows a less interpretative and more purely factual appendix, devoted to individual histories of practically every important magazine published in the United States before 1850. And to complete the pellucid clarity of the whole, there are careful chronological diagrams scattered through the book, and a complete chronological table in the back.

American magazine publishing began in what Professor Mott describes as "the lean years," when, as Noah Webster remarked in 1788, "the expectation of failure" was "connected with the very name of a Magazine." Financially perilous as magazine publishing has always remained, it was an especially difficult enterprise to make successful in colonial America. Both readers and writers were indifferent, subscriptions were hard to collect, and both manufacture and distribution faced obstacles almost inconceivable today. Notwithstanding, there were publishers, then as now, ready to make the venture. They hoped to duplicate in the colonies and in the young Republic the glittering success of British journals like the *Gentleman's Magazine* and the *London Magazine*. The publishers of the earliest American magazines were quite frank in avowing their motives. Bradford's *American Magazine*, founded in Philadelphia in 1741, the first of a long series with the same name, explained in its prospectus that "the Success and Approbation which the MAGAZINES, published in *Great-Britain*, have met with for many Years past, among all Ranks and Degrees of People, *Encouraged* us to *Attempt* a Work of the like Nature in *America*." Benjamin Franklin's *General Magazine* frankly avowed that it was published "in imitation of those in England."

These earliest magazines were relatively crude experiments. None of them was illustrated until the *Royal American*, notable chiefly for Paul Revere's engraving, was founded in Boston, two years before the Revolution which it did not live to see.

Once magazine publishing had begun, innumerable journals of every sort—general, scientific, religious, political, academic, and humorous—sprang up everywhere and vanished almost as speedily as they began. Real success on anything resembling the modern commercial scale did not come until the quarter century from 1825 to 1850, when the *New York Mirror* observed: "The United States are fertile in most things, but in periodicals they are extremely luxuriant,"—a state of affairs which has become permanent. Professor Mott estimates that there were about a hundred periodicals, other than newspapers, in the country in 1825, and about six hundred in 1850. On an average, each lasted about two years, for few achieved the enormous success of publications like *Graham's Magazine* and *Godey's Lady Book*, of which Professor Mott remarks, with typical American awe of foreign opinion—"Even London magazines imitated *Godey's*" Their success was probably due to George R. Graham's discovery that only good writing holds subscribers and only good pay will attract good writers,—a view which Godey also made his own, though he was not above reminding new contributors that "the mere appearance of their articles in the *Lady's Book* is quite a compensation in itself."

In so large a book minor errors are inevitable. It is disappointing to note that Algernon Tassin's pioneer work on "The Magazine in America" is not even mentioned in the index. It is surprising that Professor Mott should have failed to note the alterations in the *Living Age* within the last couple of years, and that he apparently believes that it is still published in Boston. The changes, it is true, lie outside the period of his book, but since he has elected to bring its history down to date, he should have done so completely. It is probable that the usefulness of his book would have been somewhat increased by the addition of a bibliography, though his footnotes are so complete that he probably thought it needless.

Bird as Poet

COLLECTED POEMS OF W. H. DAVIES. New York: Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith. 1929. $2.50.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER

OF the making of Collected Poems by W. H. Davies there is evidently no end. I seem to remember one in the pleistocene period of 1916; another (called, I think, "Collected Poems: Second Series") in 1923; a third and more selective compilation two or three years ago. Naturally one would not expect to have definitive editions of a poet who is still alive and writing energetically, and the desire on the part of author or publisher to issue such up-to-the-moment summaries is as curious as it is dangerous. I foresee, if this is to become a precedent, "Nearly Complete Collected Poems of—," "The Practically Final Five Star Edition of the Poetry of—," "The Last Complete Comprehensive Collected Work of—the Child Prodigy Before Entering College."

The difficulty of keeping track of W. H. Davies is the greater since the Welsh-English poet is still in the very flush of fecundity and his output shows no signs of diminishing. The present generous volume contains more than four hundred poems, "all," writes Davies, "I care to remember and a number of others that I would like to forget." Still he concludes sagely, "it is a matter of public demand; people prefer an author as he is, at his worst as well as at his best. But the author has this consolation: no two readers will agree as to which are his best poems and which are his worst." Davies himself, I suspect, would be hard put to it to determine the one from the other, for good and bad mingle so inextricably in his verse that we must accept him *en masse* or reject him *in toto*. One can no more imagine Davies self-critical than one can imagine him in the labor of creation, his "labor" being about as arduous as a bird's and his song being no less recreational.

The figure is not so far-fetched, for no poetry has ever been more obviously bird-like. But, it may be asked with a proper regard for ornithology, what bird? Not the lark, for Davies is no Shelley hurling himself and his cry far above the comfortable altitudes of man. Not the nightingale, for his is not Keats's clear passion nor Swinburne's operatic coloratura. It is the English robin that Davies most resembles or our own goldfinch, whose song, limited in range, is clean and sharply pitched. Without the variability of greater singers, his notes are only four or five, but the tones are so cool, the delivery so fresh, that we would not exchange the crisp spontaneity even for the versatile brilliance of the hermit-thrush. Here, for proof, is "The Example," without which no anthology of modern poetry is complete.

> Here's an example from
> A Butterfly;
> That on a rough, hard rock
> Happy can lie;
> Friendless and all alone
> On this unsweetened stone.
>
> Now let my bed be hard,
> No care take I;
> I'll make my joy like this
> Small Butterfly;
> Whose happy heart has power
> To make a stone a flower.

And here is another scarcely less popular apostrophe to "Days too Short."

> When primroses are out in Spring,
> And small, blue violets come between;
> When merry birds sing on boughs green,
> And rills, as soon as born, must sing;
>
> When butterflies will make side-leaps,
> As though escaped from Nature's hand
> Ere perfect quite; and bees will stand
> Upon their heads in fragrant deeps;
>
> When small clouds are so silvery white
> Each seems a broken rimmed moon—
> When such things are, this world too soon,
> For me, doth wear the veils of Night.

No less than thirty-three poems begin thus—"When I in praise of babies speak," "When on a summer morn I wake," "When I came forth this morn I saw," "When I . . ." "When I . . ." "When . . ."

It is easy enough to deride such naïveté, easy enough to confuse Davies with his compatriots who pipe their placid week-end pastorals. But, although a Georgian in point of time, Davies shakes himself free of "Georgianism," that false simplicity sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thoughtlessness. He does not study his subjects from the outside; it is doubtful if he studies them at all; he is always within his bucolics. Thus his sympathies are as genuine as they are ingenuous. His sense of wonder is as direct, as unmistakable as an untutored child's. He looks at clouds, cowslips, lovely ladies, glowworms, sheep, dogs, dolls, and daisies, as though they had never existed prior to his observation; and he puts them to rhyme as unselfconsciously as though never before had they been employed in verse.

> Sweet Chance, that led my steps abroad,
> Beyond the town, where wild flowers grow—
> A rainbow and a cuckoo, Lord,
> How rich and great the times are now!
> Know, all ye sheep
> And cows, that keep
> On staring that I stand so long
> In grass that's wet from heavy rain—
> A rainbow and a cuckoo's song
> May never come together again;
> May never come
> This side the tomb.

This Davies entitles "A Great Time" and it is illuminating to note what details prompt the adjective. For him beauty is not so much in the elaboration as in the mere being; greatness, therefore, is implicit in the coming together of any minutiæ—say the opposition of rainbows and cuckoos. These are his auguries of innocence; for him, also, "a dog starv'd at his master's gate Predicts the ruin of the State." His *rapport* with lamb and bat and gamecock may lead us to imply a kinship with Blake, but he is, at the best, a Blake in words of one syllable. Where Blake projects apocalypses and flaming images, Davies offers a panorama of quiet pictures; we drop from passionate vision into pleasant reverie. And if the world is neither as simple nor as spontaneous as his homely dream, Davies almost persuades us that it ought to be.

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The Bowling Green

Romany Stains

[*Reprinted, by request, for the Committee of the House of Representatives considering bills for the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment.*]

THE LETTERS OF ABELARD AND HELOISE, now first translated from the Latin by C. K. Scott Moncrieff. London, 1925. 4to, buckram, gilt, uncut. Inside back cover and end fly-leaf brandy-stained, and label, "Vieux Cognac 1842," pasted on former.

THIS I find in the proceedings of a book sale held this week at the Anderson Galleries, and I pay tribute to the delicacy of the cataloguer's discrimination. This is a new refinement of bibliophily, that the connoisseur must not merely describe all the technical points of a rare edition, but be able to identify the nature and provenance of stains and foxings. I was always amused by the wine-spots on a waistcoat of George Washington's preserved in the State House, Philadelphia. Very likely the expert who catalogued "Abelard and Eloise" could tell us the exact vintage of those long-vanished maculations.

And the same day that I found that item in the auction catalogue I met by chance a man who told me that he had foolishly attempted to bring in three bottles of wine when he landed from an Atlantic liner the other day. He is a very honest and unselfish man, he had made no particular attempt to conceal the contraband—which, indeed (he is an author) he intended to give to some publisher friends. But the inspector found it, and they made a public humiliation-scene. My friend was given a severe lecture, before a large grinning crowd of his fellow-passengers; he was heavily fined; and then, like a guilty schoolboy, ordered to carry the bottles to the edge of the pier and hurl them against the side of the ship. Which, in much misery, he did. It must have been a shocking scene, painful even to think about. I only allude to it because it is healthy, some times, to meditate anxious things.

I am not interested to argue whether or not Prohibition is a sagacious political experiment. Quite possibly it is: I cannot pretend to know. At any rate it removes the enjoyment of fine things from those too insensible or uncontriving to ensue them. But the pragmatics of the matter are irrelevant: I look about in my mind for a rationale. I can see many reasons why a government should prohibit. And the maxim *Abusus non tollit usum* may apply in reverse. But you can have no philosophy of the matter until you really know what has been prohibited. The god of pure wine has been crucified between two malefactors, hootch and gin. And much of their discredit has fallen on his divine head. As dear Henry Holt so shrewdly said, "The dinner party has been abolished by those who never saw one."

Wine is under suspicion, as beautiful things so often are. Like religion, love, laughter, any sort of explosive, it is an anxiety to officials. It cannot be tolerated unless under some hygienic pretence. Quite potable vintages are sold, legally and without scathe, because a grain or so of pepsin added makes them, theoretically, a "tonic." Peruna, I have no doubt, rises higher in the alcoholic scale than some of the bottles my friend had to crash against the *Leviathan's* steel plates.

But wine is under suspicion because it is beautiful. It opens the heart, it warms the shy poet hidden in the cage of the ribs. It melts the wax in the ears that music may be heard. It takes the terror from the tongue, that truth can be said, or what rhymes marvellously with truth. The soft warm sting on the cheekbones that a ripe Burgundy gives is only the thin outward pervasion of a fine heat within, when the cruel secret smoulder of the wit leaps into clear flame: flame that consumes the sorry rubbish of precaution and cajolery. The mind is full of answers. And then, presently, if you have dealt justly with the god, not brutishly, he gives you the completest answer of all—sleep.

Wine is under suspicion because it is beautiful, because it is ineradicably woven into the triune mystery, man, woman and god. This is wild palaver, I hear someone say; but it is part of man's folly to have to bear testimony. The goblet, pure color and form, adorably curved as woman herself, is this not fit calix for the miracle within? Or the shallow silver of the Burgundian tasting-cup with its curly snake carved for a handle. The eye of the adder notes you as you tilt the draught: to remind you that we are more than mere botanists. We pay quitrent in Eden yet, and honeysuckle and poison ivy grow gladly in the same clump.

Sage indeed are those who have him under suspicion, the shining god of wine. For his magic treads close to dark giddiness and horror, the sickness of unanswerable things. But there is a moment in his ritual, his clean austere ritual, when the heart is pure as the chemist's adoring the atom, dreaming an easier world. Then, on this warm sandbeach beside the uncounted surf, Bacchus lights his fire. You thought it was a lonely bivouac, yet looking round in the dark there is firelight in other eyes. So if you shudder to have men unburden the packed excess of their souls, you are well-advised to have stoutly drilled squads of inspectors on every pierhead of literature. Governments and good manners, tidy pyramids and proses, are not built of the great blocks of the Unsaid. Leave those to such quarrymen as William Blake and Walt Whitman. Keep Off the Leaves of Grass.

* * *

This is a dream, a foolishness, an absurdity. But I don't like to hear people talk of Amendments until they know what they've amended. I am thinking of a cellar I know in Burgundy. There, laid away in rows as carefully ranged as the lines of a poem, are the future gladness of men. There are names that I am selfish enough to enjoy rehearsing. Musigny, rich in bouquet and ether; Romanée-Conti, *d'une délicatesse.* Clos Vougeot, potent and velvety, Richebourg with exquisite power and aroma. Hospice de Beaume, strong but a thought acrid; Pommard that tingles the cheekbone; Pouilly, the perfect luncheon wine. Nuits St. Georges, bright and gracious; Chambertin, which seems to me just faintly metallic, bitterer than the soft Musigny. Meursault, which I rank below Pouilly, and adorable Chablis Moutonne, clear and fine as the lizard's bell-note when he rings, like an elfin anvil, softly under the old stone steps in the mild French dusk.

So I could go on, but I leave it to you to verify my private amateurishness from your own researches. What I want to tell you is this. In the vaulted roof of that cellar, strangely swaying in the hot flicker of the candle you hold, are the crystallized skeletons of spiders. Some moist drip of limestone juices, oozing through long silent dampness of winter, has trickled down the threads of silk, embalmed these fragile creatures in their hammocks, turned them and their webs into gossamers of airy fossil. Perfect, pale, lovely as the most inconceivable daintiness of ivory filigree, they shiver in the tawny gust of candle-heat.

Isn't this just what happens in the darkest of all cellars where purple juice is stored? In the heart of man the wine-god does the same magic. The old spider of doubt, of anguish, of secret despair, is turned to pretty crystal. There, for a while anyhow, he hangs, a tiny brittle charm. An octagonal jewel, an epigram in silk and shell. At least that's part of what I was thinking when I came upon the conjunction of those three ghosts, Abelard, Eloise, and Vieux Cognac.

Christopher Morley.

The Best of Casanova

CASANOVA: His Known and Unknown Life. By S. Guy Endore. New York: The John Day Company. 1929. $5.

Reviewed by Arthur Livingston

TO give oneself the treat of traversing Mr. Endore's gay pages is to reflect that the discovery of Casanova is always an experience to write home about. For my part I remember—among so many Memoirs, may I be allowed one little memoir of my own?—the discovery of the blithe chevalier that was made by that generation of Venetian erudites which was maturing just before the war. Those were the days of Casanovians, indeed. Molmenti was doing the "Cartggi," Aldo Ravà the first articles preparatory to the "Letters of Women to Casanova." Maynial was preparing his book in Paris. And Tage Bull, also in Paris, and Gugitz, in Vienna, were turning up every other day with some new verification.

It was a virtual sensation, in Venice, when Ravà came home from Germany with the assurance that Brockhaus had at last decided to publish the full text of the "Mémoires"; and there, at the Daniele, or Quadrio's, vast projects were launched—international coöperative editions of the "Mémoires" in translation, similar enterprises for Lorenzo Da Ponte, concerted drives on the archives in all the capitals and castles on the continent—a fervor of wit, a debauch in research! We were then, I might add, in the dying days of Positivist morality. One entered the cénacle of the Casanovians only with achievement in hand; and to keep my ticket, as it were, I remember, to hold my flickering candle among so many blazing torches, I wrote for Mr. Orvieto's "Marzocco" the literary history of Voltaire's quip at Haller, tracing that anecdote back to the novels of the Ivan Arlotto, to the comedies of Giam Battista della Porta, to the Paduan nights of Rezzonico. I did not know then, as I now believe, that Voltaire filched that repartee, which came so aptly from his lips in fencing with Casanova, from Sam Johnson, during his trip to England. And it has always been a private joke of mine, at the expense of Rudolph Altrochi, that he did not know the Voltaire-Haller-Casanova jest, when (in the *Carroccio* of New York) he traced the same witticism back from Renato Fucini also to the Piovan Arlotto.

To the general observation that others have made that Mr. Endore has caught in his delicious book all the flavor of the "Mémoires," I will add my personal perception that he has also caught all the enthusiasm of the Casanovians. Whether he measures up to the standard of the older school—that one could not exploit the work of others till one had done something new of one's own—I could not aver. But be that as it may, Mr. Endore, in his bibliographical conscientiousness, has found something almost as good. The Casanova literature is now so vast, and that dispersion of the old style scholars, after the interruption by the war, so complete, that to find some obscure article of Gugitz, some forgotten paragraph of the lamented and never too much mourned Ravà, has almost as much excitement in it as the sight of a new document from Dux would have had in the old days. What the Casanovian enthusiasm is only the Casanovian erudite can truly know. Those garrulous Venetians—Casanova, Da Ponte, Gozzi, Gratarol—raise dust clouds of minute assertions, with such a mixture of imagination, falsehood, distortion, and forgetfulness, that one who has that half-maniacal weakness for the black, acrid dust that lingers on old papers, can never resist the temptation to reconstruct the truth, however petty and inconsequential the truth may be. Did the Chevalier de Seingalt really pawn his clothes? Impossible! cries Germany. Certainly! swears Scandinavia. But the pawn ticket is at Dux! answers Italy, settling the question. Casanovians are like that. To be a true Casanovian, you have to be like that. Mr. Endore is like that.

For no one will be base enough to suppose that, whatever Casanova's reputation among the ladies, the Casanovians, the true ones, have any interest in the smut as smut. When you have a taste like that you don't go to literature—you join some society for the suppression of vice—that is where the documents are. The real fascination is, I think, in that play of wits that is constantly going on between Casanova and his reader, to see which one is going to fool the other. It is a game at which Casanova himself most often wins. You call him a liar, and then his ghost, stalking down the aisles of scholarship, suddenly throws a bit of yellowed paper in your face; and then he tells you a good one, and you say "Here at last is some truth"; and then another paper turns up, and you see it all happened in some other way.

That Casanova, in himself, is such great stuff I could never persuade myself. Can any one, on the side of the entertainment, ever stand more than a volume and half of these grimy memoirs of a cad? Really the only Casanova pages worth rereading are those in his preface where he expounds his sceptical philosophy of good and evil, deriving the one from the other reciprocally, and erecting the paradox into a perverted ethic. But even there Casanova is a thinker of that century where the *philosophe* was about the only person who knew no philosophy. But wit there is aplenty in the "Mémoires," and not infrequently a picturesque description, a lively characterization, a romantic situation. His century was a century prolix. Even Voltaire gains by condensation into one volume. I think this is the real significance of Mr. Endore's volume. Here in two evenings' reading one can get all the Casanova one really needs to know. It is pleasanter and a much more rewarding effort than to meander, with hip boots on, through the morass of the "Mémoires" themselves.

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Books of Special Interest

Under the Fury of Destiny

MEMOIRS OF LORENZO DA PONTE. Translated by ELISABETH ABBOTT. Edited and Annotated by ARTHUR LIVINGSTON. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1929. $5.

Reviewed by MORRIS BISHOP

LORENZO DA PONTE has at length come into his own in his adopted country. His memoirs, untranslated for a hundred years, have appeared in two excellent versions, furnished with much new information about his deeds and character. Next year will bring at least one volume on his life in America. Columbia University has given to the chair of Italian the name of its first incumbent. The vainglorious shade of Lorenzo da Ponte must rejoice, though ruefully; in his time, *pastor sine ovibus,* he had neither pupils nor salary.

As one rereads the memoirs (have you noticed that the scholar never reads a book—he always rereads it?) one is impressed again by the excellence of the story as a story. "The most original memoirs which artistic Italy has ever offered public curiosity. . . . He writes as well as Goldoni, he is as sprightly as the chevalier de Grammont, as adventurous as Gil Blas, as amusing as Figaro, as unfortunate as Gilbert," said no less eminent a judge than Alphonse de Lamartine, in 1860. "But," continued the poet, "his Memoirs were buried in that American forest called New York. No one, I presume, has exhumed them over there, where the most brilliant manuscript will never weigh as much as a dollar."

Lamartine, lacking the results of modern research, could read the memoirs as the odyssey of the virtuous adventurer, ever at odds with hostile fate and human malevolence. Whoever can disregard footnotes may read them so today and find them rarely interesting. Da Ponte touched the world of his delightful day at many points; he tells us of life in Italian theological seminaries, in the perpetual masquerade of Venice, Europe's country club, in the operatic circles of Vienna, Dresden, and London, in the cultivated society of New York, and in the taverns and general stores of Sunbury, Pa., and the Reading Turnpike. He was the friend of Casanova, of Joseph II of Austria, of Mozart, and of how many others! And as the hero of his own story he is the embodiment of genius erect and indomitable under the fury of destiny. For one example of the quality of his spirit, at the age of eighty-four he built the first opera house in New York. It promptly failed, as was customary with da Ponte's enterprises.

The readers of footnotes will learn of a very different da Ponte. The researchers, recognizing that the Memoirs were written as an apology for his own life and as an attack, approaching blackmail in a gentlemanly way, on his enemies, have revealed a da Ponte who is the more interesting as he is less admirable. Nicolini, the editor of the standard Italian edition, seems to have hated the man for his unwarrantable assumption of righteousness, and discredits da Ponte's every statement by inference when he cannot do so by proof. Dr. Livingston has taken a juster course, contributing to the evidence of his subject's meanness, shysterism, suppression of fact, and absolute mendacity, but enjoying him all the more as an extravagant and remarkable human being. The reader of today is rather pleased than otherwise to learn, for instance, that the young da Ponte, a priest, played the violin in his cassock in what Dr. Livingston terms the night club of a "hostess" with whom he was publicly living. None of the revelations of da Ponte's failings have unsettled the important facts: that he was a man of real accomplishment in the most diverse fields, that he was a scholar and a literary artist, that his energy in battling with circumstances was a thing almost stupefying, and that he wrote one very good book.

This edition is most praiseworthy. Elizabeth Abbott's translation reproduces excellently well the balanced prose of a century ago. The notes, by da Ponte's own successor in Columbia University, are the results of much original investigation, but are limited to the illumination of the text. The annotator has turned up a mass of new material, much of it in a Sunbury attic. To these careful and spirited notes I can make only one objection: that Dr. Livingston makes too many perilous generalizations about the racial characteristics of the Jew and the Italian.

The book is physically handsome, and is illustrated with many fine portraits, hitherto unknown to the public.

Days Afield

WILD HONEY. By SAMUEL SCOVILLE, JR. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. 1929. $3.

Reviewed by HARRY ESTY DOUNCE

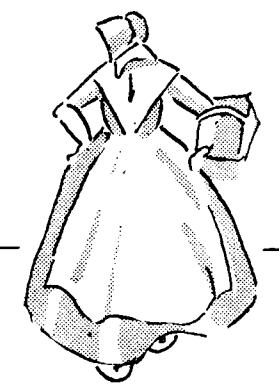
MR. SCOVILLE has too many irons in the fire. He is a Philadelphia lawyer of distinction—which may be a redundant phrase. He is an industrious writer of animal stories: the exciting and sanguinary kind dear to national magazines. He is also, broadly, one of the elect for whom outdoors was made, and specifically, an accomplished amateur ornithologist with some notable bird records to his credit, and a mighty hunter of snakes and native orchids. He can, but too infrequently does, write the pleasantest accounts of his days afield; his "Everyday Adventures" was a book of them, and this is another. Shareholders in his hobbies who enjoy the first and have waited nearly ten years for more will agree that it would be splendid to endow him and enable him, if not to retire from the law, at least to devote all his literary energies to the writing of books like these. It would be unnecessary to provide for his having free time to go off to the wilds for material, because, on his own showing, no matter how busy he may be, he goes as it is.

Speaking as the proponent of the scheme, I have no grudge against his animal fiction, not even when the characters are beasts that he cannot have seen outside a zoo. I don't doubt that it is based on the most careful research, and that everything in it could happen in nature, and does, unless stopped by the police. But I can name half a dozen other authors who can regale me with the death-grips of aard-varks and orcas; and I know of no one else who can take me out birding, or keep me composed on a falcon's giddy ledge, or amused in a rattlesnakes' den, or confident in the gloom of midwinter that spring is not far behind, as he can.

Those who read "Everyday Adventures" need only be told that "Wild Honey" is as good. New grounds are explored in it: for one, Okefinokee, the great swamp between Georgia and Florida, a paradise of a place, which is visited in three of the twelve essays (or are they "papers?") and will be, I hope, in three times three to come—or at least, till Mr. Scoville has had sight of the ivory-billed woodpeckers that are supposed to survive there. New notes are sounded. He has turned fifty, and is lightly dismayed about that, when he happens to pause in crag-climbing or bog-wading long enough to think of it. And there is one muted note of a sorrow so deep that the reader's heart goes out to him—one of the most delightful fathers to be met with in print. But the color, the humor, the exuberance, the intense yet robust response to the wilds as a whole and in detail, are unchanged.

To those who have not read Mr. Scoville in this field, his writing would be hard to describe or illustrate without doing its effect an injustice. Poetic finesses in "evoking," "recapturing," and so on are not for him; he is having too good a time living his holiday over and sharing it with you. He splashes on every bright adjective and stipples in every mosquito he wants to. It would be just like him to halt a rapt description of a sunrise for some how-to-know-the-birds information about the spots on a tomtit's wing. The point is that the results are not only agreeable, they are capital! If I must find fault with something, to prove my integrity, it shall be his likening a duck hawk's eye to "a crumb of black glass." That—unless the hawk was one-legged, or screamed "Pieces of eight!"—is an unconscious infringement.

"Wild Honey" is decorated, and in part illustrated, with twelve etchings by Emerson Tuttle. Of their purely artistic merits I am incompetent to say more than that I like all but two, which are landscapes. At birds Mr. Tuttle is excellent, as a rule, when he takes his bird "close up." His characterizations are well observed, especially in the case of a young bobwhite, and his plumage textures are truth itself, especially in the cases of a horned owl (owls being the hardest things in feathers to draw well, in that respect) and a pileated woodpecker. His etchings that show birds in flight at some distance have to stand comparison as to light-and-air qualities, and others, with Mr. Frank Benson's.



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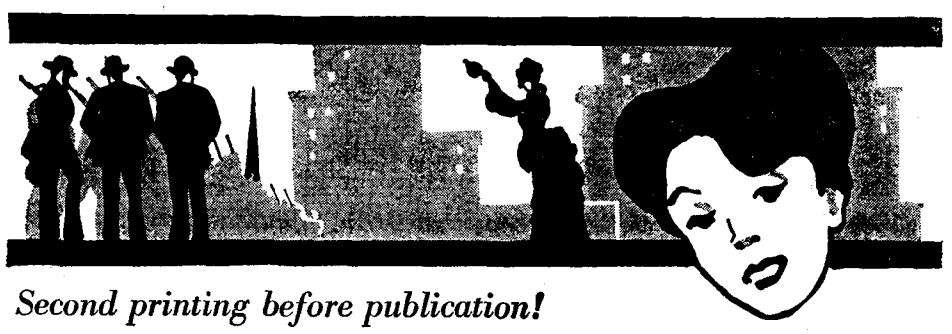

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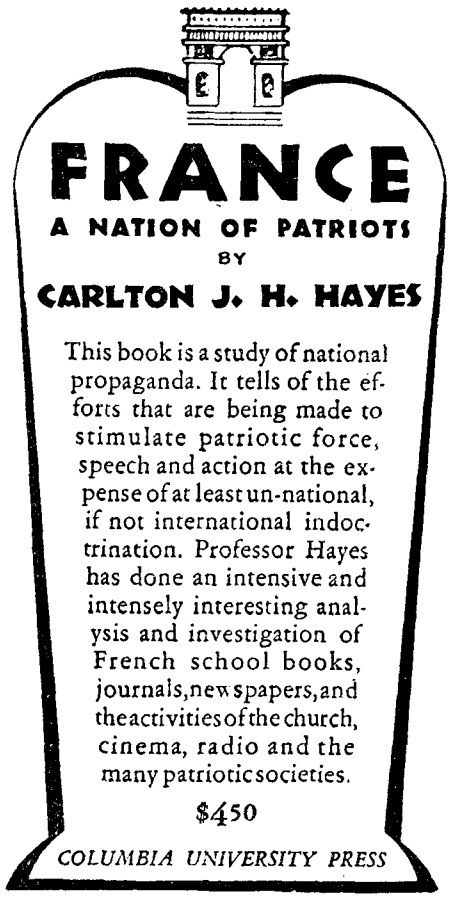
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A Russian Letter

By ALEXANDER NAZAROFF

I HAVE on my desk a pile of about twenty-five recent works of fiction from Soviet Russia. From Boris Pilnyak's "Red Tree" ("*Krassnoye Derevo*," Petropolis Publ.) to S. Semyonov's "Nathalie Tarpova" (Molodaya Gvardia Pub., Moscow), N. Bezymensky's long poems, etc., they are the best samples of the year's literary crop. Most of them—and most of Soviet fiction in general—are lavishly stuffed with sex. It is not this, however, at which an American reader might cavil. After all, all modern literatures thrive on sex. What however, is striking about Soviet literature is the unusual, the truly unprecedented, strangeness of the sex which it describes.

A complete promiscuity of relations between men and women reminding one of the cattle yards; a heroine complaining, with an engaging sincerity, to perfect strangers that she is "tired and worn out"—she underwent "too many abortions" during these months—, an occasional scene of rape described extremely "realistically,"—such are the elements which are found in a majority of Soviet novels.

Such are a few samples of the sex depicted in Moscow. Why do Soviet writers stick to that dirt, to that strange mixture of the gutter with pages from Dr. Kraft Ebbing, so obstinately? The answer, or, at least, a part of the answer is clear. These writers honestly depict what they see in actual life. It is an old truth, and an undeniable one, at that, that the Soviet régime, with its virtual abolition of marriage and with its constant war on traditions, on the "old family," "old morals," etc., has plunged Russia into a complete moral chaos. Naked Red ladies amiably inviting men to come in actually fill the "Houses of Rest" where Soviet employees spend their vacation and where the action of L. Gumilevsky's novel takes place, and N. Bogdanov's young "Comsomoltzy" are actually to be found in every Russian city; newspapers published in Moscow daily confirm it. If so, how could Soviet writers fail to describe it all?

Is, however, all Russia thus freed of "prejudices"? Certainly not. Behind this chaos, seething and sizzling on the surface, at least half of the country abides by the same "bourgeois" ideas and morals by which the rest of the world abides. Why, then, do Soviet writers ignore so completely this half of Russia? Why is it, that, for instance, these writers never—or practically never—describe more or less lasting relations between man and woman?

As the reader knows, great changes have taken place in Russia during these last two years. Abandoning the New Economic Policy, Joseph Stalin, the autocratic master of the country, has decided to attempt a new jump into the uncompromising Communism. Economically speaking, that means the Five Years Plan, the almost complete suppression of free trade, the idiotic struggle against "kulaks" (well-to-do peasants) in the villages. Politically, this expresses itself in persecutions and executions of "counter-revolutionaries" of which cables from Moscow inform us almost every week. In a word, after six years of comparative sanity in which the country lived under the New Economic Policy, it is now being thrown back to that régime of insanity which resuscitates in one's mind the gloomy years of 1919 and 1920.

Literature in Russia is, as is well known, a "nationalized" product: like trade and industry, it is controlled by the State. It is natural, then, that this general political change has had a repercussion on—as Soviet papers put it—"the literary front," too. In the years of the New Economic Policy, the attitude of the government in literary matters was lenient and liberal. It is true that, in order to have his manuscripts accepted, a novelist had to express in unequivocal terms his sympathy with the Soviet régime. If, however, he did so, a relatively wide freedom was allowed to him. In his works he could even criticize the defects of the Soviet system, provided that his criticism at bottom remained friendly. But now this is no longer so.

The change began to make itself felt at first in various separate symptoms. For instance, the official Soviet papers started an unusually violent campaign against Boris Pilynyak, one of the most outstanding Soviet writers, for a "crime" which, in former years, would have been left unnoticed: he dared to publish in Berlin a novel of his ("The Red Tree") which had been prohibited by censors in Moscow. There still are reasons to fear that, for this "breach of proletarian discipline," he may be ousted for good from Russia's literary field. Valentine Kataev, with whose novel, "The Embezzlers," American readers are familiar, also got his share of scolding: in a magazine article describing the life of a factory, he permitted himself to say that he failed to perceive in its workmen the spirit of "proletarian enthusiasm." . . . This, however, was only the beginning. Now the Government conceals no longer that it has firmly decided "to eradicate from literature the last remnants of bourgeois tendencies." "In literature, as in economics, a firm and clear proletarian line must be definitely established,"—it is so that a resolution passed by one of the main organs of the Communist Party reads.

But "a firm and clear proletarian line" means much more than the absence of political criticism. It means that, in his picturization of life, a writer must strictly abide by Marxist and Leninist views. If, for example, he describes intellectuals and workmen, these intellectuals must be drawn as miserable, unattractive creatures, and workmen—as "positive" figures: the contrast must be in favor of the proletarian class, otherwise it will be "counter-revolution." Hence the fact that intellectuals and cultured men in general figure so seldom in Soviet fiction. If a writer depicts relations between man and woman, they may be anything on earth except love in the "bourgeois" sense: according to the materialist dogma of Marxism, love does not exist; there exists merely the attraction of the two opposite sexes, plus the proletarian comradeship. It is for this reason, that, though so lavish in its depictions of sexual crime, Soviet literature never has given us a serious psychological painting of a more or less lasting romance.

No "love"; no "cultured men"; no complicated psychology (for the very word "psych"—the soul—is looked at askance by the worshippers of the Marxist materialism), —such are some of the "do-nots" by which a Soviet writer is limited in his creative work. But substract these elements from literature and see what a terrific misery will remain as a balance! For is it not on "love," "cultured men," and "complicated psychology" that ninety per cent of all modern European literature, from "La Chartreuse de Parme" and "Anna Karenina" to the "Forsyte Saga" and "À la Recherche du Temps Perdu," is built?

Of course, Soviet writers often deviate from the "proletarian line"; but still more often they obey the Government, for otherwise who would publish their works? The result is that the quality of their works, never very high, is deteriorating. Most of the best twenty-five works of fiction of this year's crop lying on my desk are, in spite of all the naked bodies and "daring" scenes they contain, pale, lifeless works. While reading them, one feels as though one were wading through a morgue. They certainly are representative of a literature lying in the Procrustean bed of Marxism.

Simple Folk

LE ROMAN DU GRAND VENEUR. Par MAURICE GAUCHEZ. Paris: La Renaissance du Livre. 1930.

Reviewed by BENJAMIN M. WOODBRIDGE

A FRENCH novel, smacking of the forest and its denizens and portraying the lives of truly simple folk, is proof of originality in its author. Better still, it brings a welcome tonic to the reader, surfeited with artificially subtilized *milieux* and sub-rational behavior of the sophisticated. M. Gauchez has conjured up the sprites of the greenwood to portray his hero, Hubert. Now he is a centaur, leaping a crevasse flanked by slippery rock wells, now the rustic lover, winning his lady by sheer, untutored honor, now the sly wag, addressing his efficient spouse indirectly by a monologue to his dogs, or swapping yarns with the village squire. His love of fair play has earned the affectionate respect of the very poachers whose wiles he must foil. The whole book breathes the chivalry of the forest while offering in realistic staccato sketches of quaint village manners in the Ardennes.

"Scottish Family History" (Oliver & Boyd), recently isued in Edinburgh, consists of an essay on "How to write the History of a Scots Family" by Sir James Balfour Paul, who was Lord Lyon King-of-Arms for many years, and of a list of the names of the families of Scotland, with references to where information (chiefly printed, but occasionally in manuscript) may be found. The list is compiled by Margaret Stuart.

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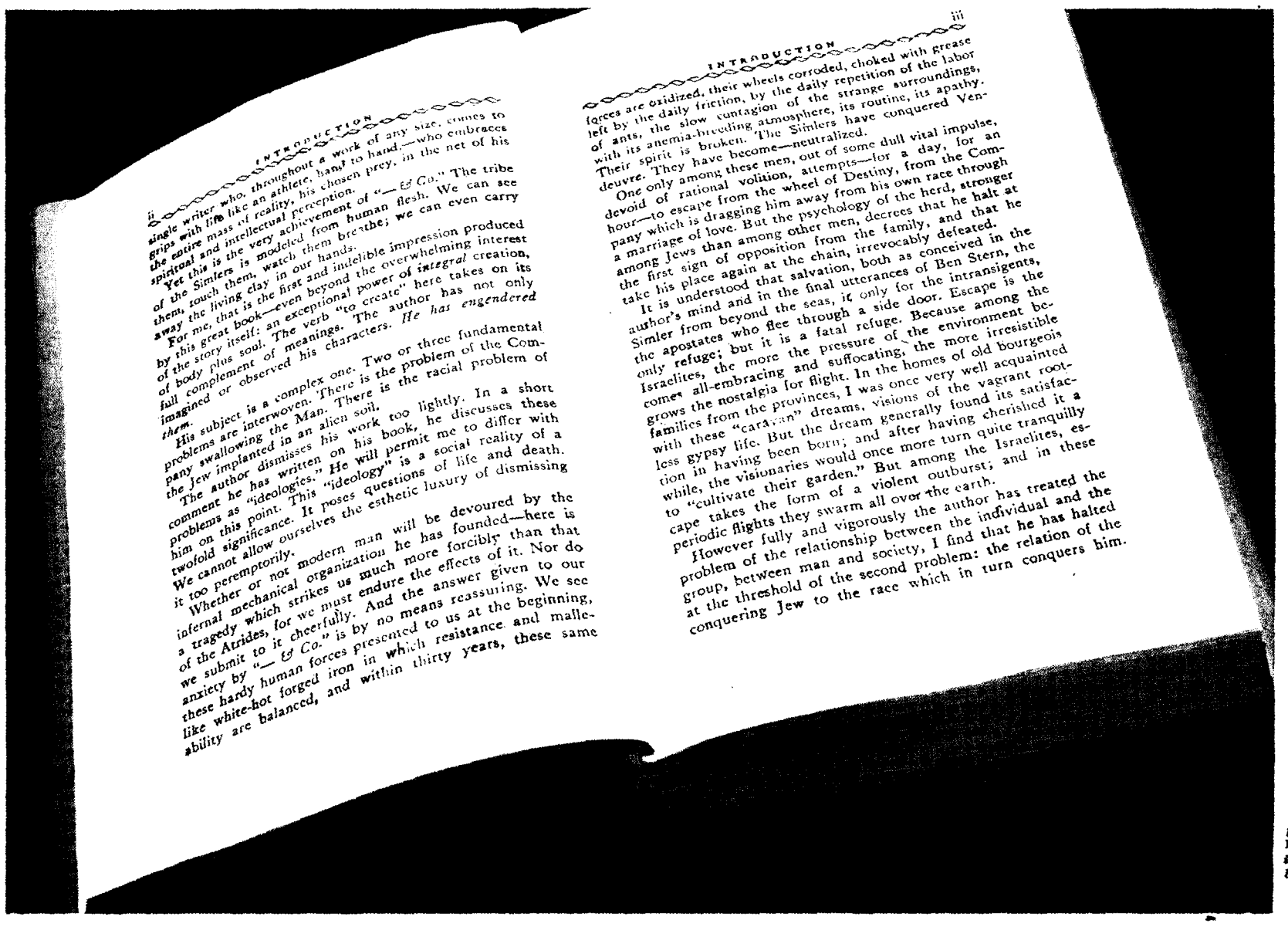
ii INTRODUCTION

single writer who, throughout a work of any size, comes to grips with life like an athlete, hand to hand,—who embraces the entire mass of reality, his chosen prey, in the net of his spiritual and intellectual perception.

Yet this is the very achievement of "— *& Co.*" The tribe of the Simlers is modeled from human flesh. We can see them, touch them, watch them breathe; we can even carry away the living clay in our hands.

For me, that is the first and indelible impression produced by this great book—even beyond the overwhelming interest of the story itself: an exceptional power of *integral* creation, of body plus soul. The verb "to create" here takes on its full complement of meanings. The author has not only imagined or observed his characters. *He has engendered them.*

His subject is a complex one. Two or three fundamental problems are interwoven. There is the problem of the Company swallowing the Man. There is the racial problem of the Jew implanted in an alien soil.

The author dismisses his work too lightly. In a short comment he has written on his book, he discusses these problems as "ideologies." He will permit me to differ with him on this point. This "ideology" is a social reality of a twofold significance. It poses questions of life and death. We cannot allow ourselves the esthetic luxury of dismissing it too peremptorily.

Whether or not modern man will be devoured by the infernal mechanical organization he has founded—here is a tragedy which strikes us much more forcibly than that of the Atrides, for we must endure the effects of it. Nor do we submit to it cheerfully. And the answer given to our anxiety by "— *& Co.*" is by no means reassuring. We see these hardy human forces presented to us at the beginning, like white-hot forged iron in which resistance and malleability are balanced, and within thirty years, these same

iii INTRODUCTION

forces are oxidized, their wheels corroded, choked with grease left by the daily friction, by the daily repetition of the labor of ants, the slow contagion of the strange surroundings, with its anemia-breeding atmosphere, its routine, its apathy. Their spirit is broken. The Simlers have conquered Vendeuvre. They have become—neutralized.

One only among these men, out of some dull vital impulse, devoid of rational volition, attempts—for a day, for an hour—to escape from the wheel of Destiny, from the Company which is dragging him away from his own race through a marriage of love. But the psychology of the herd, stronger among Jews than among other men, decrees that he halt at the first sign of opposition from the family, and that he take his place again at the chain, irrevocably defeated.

It is understood that salvation, both as conceived in the author's mind and in the final utterances of Ben Stern, the Simler from beyond the seas, if only for the intransigents, the apostates who flee through a side door. Escape is the only refuge; but it is a fatal refuge. Because among the Israelites, the more the pressure of the environment becomes all-embracing and suffocating, the more irresistible grows the nostalgia for flight. In the homes of old bourgeois families from the provinces, I was once very well acquainted with these "caravan" dreams, visions of the vagrant rootless gypsy life. But the dream generally found its satisfaction in having been born; and after having cherished it a while, the visionaries would once more turn quite tranquilly to "cultivate their garden." But among the Israelites, escape takes the form of a violent outburst; and in these periodic flights they swarm all over the earth.

However fully and vigorously the author has treated the problem of the relationship between the individual and the group, between man and society, I find that he has halted at the threshold of the second problem: the relation of the conquering Jew to the race which in turn conquers him.

pages 2 and 3 from
ROMAIN ROLLAND'S
introduction to "— & Co."
by JEAN-RICHARD BLOCH

I *have known* GREAT MOMENTS . . .

I HAVE known great moments in literature—moments of sudden and sympathetic awareness, moments that glow through the years, alive, unforgettable, deeply satisfying . . . moments that clustered thick in boyhood, made youthful days memorable, and now animate and heighten more mature experience . . .

Today, I experienced another such moment . . . Once again I felt the impact of a fresh and powerful personality, of a creative force, expressing itself with the unmistakable touch of genius . . . Once again I met characters of such flesh and bone, such soul and body, that they spoke and moved, lived and loved, strove and suffered, with the four-dimensional actuality of those about me.

This saga that moves me so deeply is far from the staccato, mood-limited novels of the current tempo and fashion. "*— And Company*" by JEAN-RICHARD BLOCH, deals with truths, confronts issues, and depicts passions which know not time or frontier . . . For this ROMAIN ROLLAND hailed "*— And Company*" as the "only French novel I know of which is worthy to take its place among the masterpieces of Balzac's *Human Comedy*"—for this the great ZANGWILL saluted it with magnificent praise. "It flows along like a river and has the majesty of a forest"—and for this, ARNOLD BENNETT proclaimed it "a permanent achievement."

I shall invite my friends to read "*— And Company*". I shall tell them to expect a rare and noble pleasure—a book written from the marrow of the soul, that pictures life with prophetic and patriarchal vision, and yet with infinite tenderness and irony . . . And for myself, I shall add to my gallery of dateless portraits, for frequent and satisfying contemplation, those passionately real characters that Bloch has created . . . of Hippolyte Simler, *Père*, the Simler family, and their entourage . . . "We can see them, touch them, watch them breathe; we can even carry away the living clay in our hands" . . . says ROMAIN ROLLAND in his introduction, and it needs but a few excerpts from the book itself to disclose BLOCH'S vivid power of integral creation.

* * *

"A hurricane ran through the neck; a roar filled the room: . . . Hippolyte had turned around. Something like a tide of the sea swept into the lamplight. A mass that seemed flat because of its breadth, filigreed with red veins in the place of cheeks, and backed by one of those thick sculls whose monumental front makes one conscious of its density and volume." (page 55)

* * *

"A neck of dull gold presents itself to Joseph's vision. A slightly abrupt gait carries ahead of him the full curve of the most supple of backs: the sunlight falls upon the pearly strand of a brow, and a pair of violet eyes gaze into his with an insupportable blend of indulgence, irony and fervent lassitude." (page 225)

* * *

". . . The machines stand there in a row with the tranquillity of creditors, gluttonous and gorged . . . They do indeed embody a privileged debt, the debt to labour." (page 179)

* * *

". . . Two terms, two forces: first of all Simler, *good—and then the* Company. *In the first beginning, there was* Simler—*alone, like God. And then* Simler *grew, and, conscious of his solitude, like God, he created the* Company, *as God created the world. Then, the* Company *grew also. And there happened to* Simler *what happens to all people who found businesses, the business devours the man . . . "* (page 393)

* * *

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Points of View

Dumas and Poe Again

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir:

Mr. George Taylor's letter, which appeared in your issue for February 8, was of peculiar interest to me, because I also had noted the similarity between the quotation from the Dumas manuscript and "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" of Edgar Allan Poe. It so happens that I have been working on a book dealing with the tales of various romanticists of the early nineteenth century, including the stories of Poe, and I therefore immediately recalled another reference to the same tale, in Poe's "Marginalia." Here he suggests that Eugène Sue had borrowed from "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." Poe is discussing the translation, by C. H. Town, of Sue's "Mysteries of Paris," and he notes the following in regard to the story called "Gringalet et Coupe en Deux":

> But I say that I was *surprised* in coming upon this story—and I *was* so, because one of its points has been suggested to M. Sue by a tale of my own. "Coupe en Deux" has an ape remarkable for its size, strength, ferocity, and propensity to imitation. Wishing to commit a murder so cunningly that discovery would be impossible, the master of this animal teaches it to imitate the functions of a barber, and incites it to cut the throat of a child, under the idea that, when the murder is discovered, it will be considered the uninstigated deed of the ape.
>
> On first seeing this, I felt apprehensive that some of my friends would accuse me of plagiarizing from it my "Murders in the Rue Morgue." But I soon called to mind that this latter was first published in *Graham's Magazine* for April, 1841. Some years ago the Paris *Charivari* copied my story with complimentary comments; objecting, however. to the "Rue Morgue" on the ground that no such street (to the *Charivari's* knowledge) existed in Paris. I do not wish, of course, to look upon M. Sue's adaptation of my property in any other light than that of a compliment. The similarity *may* have been entirely accidental.

If Sue actually adopted this material from Poe, it is an amusing coincidence, as Sue was, of course, a contemporary rival of Dumas. Also, if Poe originated all of the details, and if certain elements were made use of by Sue, and still others by Dumas, what an extraordinary sensation this tale must have caused in France!

Mr. W. Roberts, who has examined the Dumas manuscript and has described it in the *Literary Supplement* of the London *Times* for November 21, 1929, makes special mention of the paper on which the manuscript is written. He claims that it dates from the late 'forties or early 'fifties. If that be the case, Dumas would have had ample opportunity to have come across the Poe story in a French translation, since one appeared on July 11-13, 1846, in *La Quotidienne*, and another on October 12 of the same year in *Le Commerce*. Dumas, as I once pointed out in an article on French bibliographers, which ran serially in *The Bulletin of Bibliography* during 1925 and 1926, was not over-scrupulous about employing "collaborators" for a great many of his works. Frequently the "collaborator" contributed the ideas in addition to doing all of the work involved in the construction of a novel or play. Might not this new manuscript prove an instance where Dumas was borrowing an idea from an unacknowledged "collaborator," who was actually Poe? Possibly Dumas later decided to substitute Poe's name in the account in order to stave off criticism in case the origin of the background should be questioned.

Mr. Thomas Ollive Mabbot of Hunter College, New York City, was another person who made note of the similarity between the passage in the Dumas manuscript and Poe's "Murders in the Rue Morgue." In a letter published in the *Literary Supplement* of the London *Times* for January 2, 1930, Mr. Mabbott suggests that Dumas might have read Lowell's biographical sketch of Poe, which appeared in *Graham's Magazine* for February, 1845, and so have become acquainted with Poe's life and works. This biography, though many of the items are said to have been furnished by Poe himself, is in several instances very unreliable. Lowell mentions Poe's attempt to join the Greek cause, and his subsequent return to St. Petersburg. Yet most Poe authorities seem to agree that he probably never visited Europe after his early trip with the Allens, when he stayed in the British Isles from 1815 to 1820; and that if he did, the later journey was taken in 1832. What seems to have been overlooked by Mr. Mabbott, and likewise by Lowell, is a discrepancy in the dates. In *Graham's Magazine* the entry which immediately follows the information about the end of Poe's student days at the University of Virginia in December, 1826, and which precedes the mention of his entry at West Point in June, 1830, reads:

> Then came a boyish attempt to join the fortunes of the insurgent Greeks, which ended at St. Petersburg, where he got into difficulties through want of a passport. from which he was rescued by the American consul and sent home. He now entered the military academy at West Point.

Therefore, according to the above passage, Poe's European escapade must have taken place between the beginning of 1827 and June 1830, when he entered West Point. This was not possible, since we can account for practically every moment of his time throughout these very difficult years. The obvious time when he might have gone to Europe was during the mysterious year 1832 and the early months of 1833, after he had been expelled from West Point. 1832 is the only year for which biographers cannot fully account, though very likely Poe passed the time struggling against poverty in Baltimore. He only emerged from obscurity in the summer of 1833, to win the prize for his story, "The Manuscript Found in a Bottle." Since the Dumas manuscript clearly dates the meeting of Poe and Dumas as about the year 1832, it would have been chronologically possible for such a friendship to have existed.

An examination of the life of Dumas for the year 1832 reveals the fact that during that year he had been producing for the first time: "Térésa, La Tour de Nesle," "Le Mari de la Cauve," and an unsuccessful play entitled, "Le Fils de l'Émigré." In April, Dumas had a mild seizure of cholera, which had been raging in Paris for some months. Then, on July 21, he left for a journey to Switzerland, where he seems to have enjoyed himself thoroughly, and to have experienced the adventures which he soon afterwards recorded in his first series of "Impressions de Voyage." Back again in Paris by October, he was met with a cool reception by theatrical managers on account of the failure of his "Le Fils de l'Émigré." Dumas always found it difficult to economize, but his trip to Switzerland had cost far more than he had reckoned. He was therefore obliged to work hard and to live frugally for a long time. Indeed, we are told that he was forced to eat his meals at a cabaret in the Rue de Tournon, where the price was only six sous the plate. Was not this perhaps a logical time for him to have enjoyed Poe's friendship, if Poe ever did visit Paris?

HARRIET DOROTHEA MACPHERSON.
Columbia University.

Macedonican Slavs

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

SIR:

Much as I should like to, I cannot let Frances J. Olcott's review of Ida Zeitlin's "King's Pleasure" go without a protest. I think "King's Pleasure" is a great mistake. Miss Zeitlin's style is not suited to the fresh air temperament of the Southern Slavs.

But my chief objection is to the erroneous imputation that the Southern Slavs are organically warlike. And who are these "Southern Slavs"? The Serbs? The Bulgarians? Macedonians? Croatians? The Macedonian Slavs were the first to appear on the Balkan peninsula. They drifted south in families and settled in the Macedonian hills and valleys without noise. History and folk-lore depict these people as singularly gentle and peace-loving. They conquer the hearts of the warlike Bulgar Tartars with their mildness so that the conquerors are eager to learn of the conquered, adopt their language, and intermarry on equal terms.

Later they welcome the Serbs as brothers. They live at peace with the Byzantines, study in their monasteries, and send out Christian missionaries among their brother Slavs. They fight the Turks because the holy war policy is absolutely destructive.

In more recent years, after Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece were freed from the Turks, the Macedonian Slavs organized the Committee of Safety, the much maligned "comitadje," solely for the purpose of defending their homes at times when the Turks took it into their heads to raid the villages and carry off the produce and young women.

I doubt that the Serbs are or were as warlike as Miss Zeitlin and Miss Olcott would have us believe, but I leave it to a Serb to defend them. I wish merely to distinguish between the "warlike" Southern Slavs and my own people, the notoriously peace-loving and gentle Macedonian Slavs. Both history and folk-lore bear me out.

IRENE MARMAROFF.
Corona, L. I.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Biography

THREE WOMEN: Saint Teresa, Madame De Choiseul, Mrs. Eddy. By H. E. WORTHAM. Little, Brown. 1929.

A biographer who is said to be of the school of Strachey is expected to be ironical but with restraint, and Mr. Wortham's irony is restrained. It appears here and there in the studies of Saint Theresa and Madame de Choiseul, but his liking and admiration for these women is too hearty for irony. The miracles of Saint Teresa are passed with a smile more or less deftly concealed, but the woman was too fine to be made fun of. The Duchesse de Choiseul was a great lady of the old régime, wife of Louis the Fifteenth's minister, and somewhat of a saint too in her way. In the study of Mrs. Eddy irony reappears. The subject perhaps invites it. The character of Mrs. Eddy is still no doubt controversial, but those of us to whom Science and Health has not as yet brought any revolutionary experience, may find the history of Christian Science not uninviting of irony. Mr. Wortham's is under such admirable control that one is not quite sure what he does think of Mrs. Eddy. He thinks her "the most remarkable member of her sex whom America has produced," but "remarkable" is a non-committal word. All three women are remarkable, but in very different ways. Saint Teresa was a mystic of extraordinary abilities as a practical executive. Madame de Choiseul was a woman of the world whose sweetness of character no worldliness could injure. The personality of Mrs. Eddy is still controversial.

Fiction

THE CRIMSON CIRCLE. By EDGAR WALLACE. Doubleday, Doran. 1929. $2.

Though this detective story is undoubtedly one of the best among the dozen Mr. Wallace has produced in the past year, the reader is let in for so drastic a hoodwinking that the conclusion tends to irritate rather than to appease expectations. An unknown criminal, signing his blackmail messages "The Crimson Circle," his identity kept secret even from his confederates, terrorizes London by the murders he commits when marked victims fail to comply with his extortionate demands. As the tale unfolds, readers who attempt to single out from the numerous characters a likely one to suspect will find that they are repeatedly misled and given not the slightest clue from which to work out any plausible theory of the case. Consequent dissatisfaction may be felt with the astonishing dénouement, but once begun, the story tightens its hold so steadily upon the attention that to leave the book unfinished is well-nigh impossible.

IT WALKS BY NIGHT. By JOHN DICKSON CARR. Harpers. 1930. $2.

Mystery story addicts who like their detective fiction steeped in blood and horror will get their fill of grewsomeness in Mr. Carr's ingenious tale. We know few scenes in recent detective literature more completely calculated to arouse shudders than the discovery of the murdered Duc de Saligny in the card room of a Paris gambling house, and few books that follow up an initial effectively contrived situation with others so nearly at the same tension.

Mr. Carr writes well, with an occasional vivid picturesqueness of description that lends color to his narrative, and with the ability to create a taut atmosphere out of background as well as incident. His story is highly melodramatic and wildly improbable, but it moves easily within the field of its own assumptions and holds the nerves, if not the commonsense, of the reader pliant to its mood and happenings. Moreover, it successfully maintains its mystery to the end the resolution of its plot hinging on an often-used expedient which yet is adroitly held from the reader until close to the final pages. It is one of the Harper Sealed Mystery stories concerning which the presumption is fairly safe that few copies will retain their yellow slip intact.

THE REBEL PASSION. By KAY BURDEKIN. Morrow. 1929. $3.

This narrative is strong on moralizing, but short on entertainment. The author, presumably a woman, tells of the visions seen by a medieval monk, Giraldus, in the abbey at Glastonbury. These visions, with a heavenly Child acting as cicerone, interpret the known history of the world and suggest a utopian future. The child shows Giraldus the growth of the spirit of pity in human hearts, beginning with man as he emerged from the primeval slime and finishing with a gloriously happy society several hundred years in advance of our own time. Pity is the rebel passion, according to a quotation that Kay Burdekin selects from Gilbert Murray's introductory note to "The Trojan Women": "Its hand is against the strong, against the organized force of society, against conventional sanctions and accepted Gods." The narrative is pious, faintly anti-clerical, and thoroughly didactic. One wishes that it were less dry and barren.

The jacket of "The Rebel Passion" suggests parchment, and the whole volume is most attractively printed and bound.

RASPUTIN. Translated from the Russian of IVAN NAZHIVIN by C. J. HOGARTH. Knopf. 1929. 2 vols. $6.

One is somewhat at a loss to understand why 7550 pages of good paper and printing should be given to the dreary and wholly commonplace two-volume novel by Ivan Nazhvin which appears under the title "Rasputin." In 1923, when the Russian version appears to have been published, there may have been some slight "news" or controversial interest in its fictionizing of very recent history. Read in 1929, after innumerable memoirs and various first-class war books have been written, both about the war itself and about almost every aspect of the latter years of Imperial Russia and the early years of the Russian Revolution, Nazhivin's immense but essentially scrappy narrative is as dead as a door nail.

The panorama which he endeavors to paint stretches all the way from the years preceding the Great War to those following the Bolshevik Revolution, and at one point or another he mentions most of the characters on which such a flood of vivid first-hand light has been cast—Nicholas II and the Czaritsa, Rasputin, Kerensky, Lenin, and various Russian politicians and military men, as well as types representing different classes of old Russia. He says nothing new or significant about any of these people. His attempts to dramatize history are invariably feeble, and occasionally, as when he ventures to give glimpses of war, almost ridiculous. Rasputin himself appears only briefly and in a form that is, to say the least, sketchy, as compared with such a solid and complete, if possibly melodramatic, picture as that done by Fülöp Müller a year or so ago.

In short, the whole huge and uninspired narrative reads like a fictional paraphrase of scraps of memoirs, newspaper or émigré gossip, and matter which has been much more soundly and vividly put by somebody else.

THE MAN WITH THE SQUEAKY VOICE. By R. A. J. WALLING. Morrow. 1929. $2.

THE BAINBRIDGE MURDER. By CORTLAND FITZSIMMONS. McBride. 1929. $2.

STILL WATERS. By F. F. VAN DE WATER. Crime Club. 1929. $2.

To the uncountable number of detective stories issued in the past are added three more. "The Man With the Squeaky Voice," is by R. A. J. Walling, who has to his credit a couple of competent tales. This new one bears traces of rather hurried writing and though the plot is mystifying and plausible enough, for this reason it is rather less satisfying than his others. The time is long past when a plot and excitement can make a success. Today readers who revel in murders want their plot and excitement and good writing and characterization to carry them home before blood almost permanently chilled by too many fiction murders will consent to heat a little and race around veins and arteries. Mr. Walling, however, even at his less good, is a competent writer, and this book, though not as satisfying as one would expect from him, is a readable murder story and will provide one evening's quiet pleasure for the tired business man, though we doubt if he'll think it good enough to tell his partner all about it in the office the next morning.

"The Bainbridge Murder," though provided with a map on the jacket suffers from the same defect as Mr. Walling's tale only more so, and so much more so that we definitely class it as dull, though it contains its murder and two suicides in addition.

The Crime Club fulfils its function competently in issuing "Still Waters," by F. F. Van de Water. It is a brightly written and readable tale, containing its fair quota of deaths and excitement, and the author does not neglect to give us a little humor, a fact which we ask other detective novel writers

(*Continued on next page*)

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The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from preceding page*)

to note. Most of them take their murders seriously and give us as little humor as a textbook. Mr. Van de Water's tale deals with liquor and its smuggling and hardly attains the distinction which would put it in the first rank. But the before mentioned business man will read till it's finished, without ever the thought of bed as a more desirable occupation entering his head.

AFTERNOON AND TWILIGHT OF VANDA PINELLI. By L. STENI. Cape & Smith. 1930. $2.50.

The people of Miss Steni's book—one concludes that it must be by a woman—are always a little vague and mysterious in their lives and actions. The principal character, in fact, seems never to emerge from the shadows of unreality and pretension in spite of the very full account of her loves, her misery in London, and her final sad end as a kleptomaniac, which is vouchsafed us by the author. Yet there are individual good things in this puzzling book, such as the account of Vanda Pinelli's first view of Leicester Square by night. The great thing lacking is order and a convincing arrangement of the events in the story, which is too apt to advance by jerks and jumps, leaving out the most important bits, and emphasizing some trivial conversation of the heroine not only inessential but more often than not boring to read.

As is generally the case in these stories of failure and disintegration, the atmosphere is from the beginning oppressive. No character of reasonable cheerfulness appears in the book, no man's motives are above suspicion. There is, moreover, a good deal of sheer bad phrasing and awkward writing which does not help matters. Although the author seems familiar enough with London and English life, one may doubt that the English language is her native form of expression. With practice, the evident imagination and analytical power of such a writer may be turned to some better purpose, but at present her work is both lacking in style and insufficiently convincing.

THE SECRET OF THE FLAMES. By RALPH RODD. Dial. 1929. $2.

Here is a mystery tale which, if not startlingly original, is at least thoroughly up to specifications and guaranteed to do all that a mystery tale can reasonably be expected to do. Mr. Rodd handles his complications skilfully: the thread is twisted again and again, but every turn arises from the original situation, and the narrator plays scrupulously fair; nothing is introduced merely to baffle or perplex the reader, and however far afield the action seems to wander, all its mazy windings lead to the solution. The story may fairly be described as one of ratiocination, a problem story rather than a thriller; the author is too honest to resort to the exasperating trick of padding, by allowing the characters to state their various guesses at length. The action never lags, the characters, although mere "flats" as is customary, are sketched deftly and not without humor, and the attention and belief of the reader are never lost. Best of all, it will be a shrewd guesser indeed who reaches a proper conclusion.

SLOWBAGS AND ARETHUSA. By ADRIAN ALINGTON. Harcourt, Brace. 1930. $2.50.

Cursed with this astonishing title (which suggests a long "Ode to the Night-Jar" that appeared recently in the English *Poetry Review*) and put together within a case and jacket of nauseous pink and yellow, this big book is really made up of three distinct stories. First comes a hundred-page English popular romance about a man from his birth, in a small town rectory, through childhood, school, the War, and schoolmastering, to the time when he decides to go on a prospecting expedition to the Balkans. There follows, after a complete break, a two-hundred-page English popular romance about a woman from her birth in an ugly London suburb through childhood, school, a career on the stage, a war baby in Paris, and itinerant dancing on the Continent to the time when she finds herself in a tight place—where?—(all together, now) in the Balkans. The last section is a hundred-and-thirty-page American "slick paper" magazine yarn of action and rescue, with a final clinch and fade-out. Each piece is fairly well done according to its type and, with the exception of the first, a unit that could stand alone. Save that when they meet, on page 341, the hero is still shy, and the heroine still has green eyes, there is almost no connection among the three parts. Perhaps Mr. Alington, in this, his first effort, felt his abilities and could not resist trying so much. But why they were put together remains a mystery of no importance.

But since the "English" parts are made palatable by an unusual amount of the surface charm of their type, which is like the colors on rotten meat, since the originality of the Balkan scene takes the curse off the "American" part, and since each part is fairly representative of its type, the book presents to those curious about nationality in popular fiction an odd mixture, or rather juxtaposition, worth the trouble of reading. Probably the first three hundred and forty pages will limit the book's public to such literary perverts.

OUT OF THE VALLEY. By *Willett Thompson.* London: Stockwell.

THE HOUSE OF THE DEY. By *Florence Riddell.* Lippincott. $2.

NEW LAMPS. By *Alberta Stedman Eagan.* Macaulay.

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WANDERING WILLIE'S TALE. By *Sir Walter Scott.* Mitchell. $1.

THE ALTAR OF HONOUR. By *Ethel M. Dell.* Putnam. $2.

GREAT MODERN SHORT STORIES. Edited by *Grant Overton.* Modern Library. 95 cents.

THE DEPUTY SHERIFF. By *Clarence E. Mulford.* Doubleday, Doran. $2 net.

THE ENCOUNTER. By *Anne Douglas Sedgwick.* Houghton Mifflin. $2.50.

SEVEN MONTHS AND SEVEN DAYS. By *Kaj Klitgaard.* Doubleday, Doran. $3 net.

EX-MISTRESS. Brentano. $2.

THE NOBLE COURTESAN. By the *Princess Cervée-Baromti.* Macaulay. $2.

WASTED SALT. By *George W. Ogden.* Dodd, Mead. $2.

TENTHRAGON. By *Constance Savery.* King. $2. $2.

Government

THE OTHER SIDE OF GOVERNMENT. By DAVID LAWRENCE. Scribners. 1929. **$2.**

By the "other side" of government Mr. Lawrence seems to mean the side which figures less conspicuously in the public eye than Congress, the President, and the Supreme Court—in a word, the administrative activities. These are performed by the ten departments and by the boards and commissions which have been set up in addition. Mr. Lawrence's book, however, is not altogether confined to this "other side" nor does he give a methodical treatment of it. He begins by correcting some "popular misconceptions" regarding the Federal Constitution, such as that it gives the citizen his right to vote and limits the numbers of terms a President may serve. In view of the repeated discussion of the desirability or the undesirability of breaking the tradition against a third term, it may be wondered whether there are many persons who labor under the delusion that in this matter there is a limit imposed by the Constitution.

Mr. Lawrence's chapters on Congress and the President and the Supreme Court are short and elementary. Better rounded as a rule are those in which he takes up, one after another, a single activity policy, or problem—regulation of agricultural competition, farm relief, merchant marine, air transport, Muscle Shoals, control of radio, and so on. There are chapters also on the relations between the Government and the press, our foreign service, our foreign policy, and "The Call of Public Service." To treat so many matters within the compass of fewer than three hundred small pages satisfactorily would require a conciseness which Mr. Lawrence only occasionally exhibits. In consequence, his treatment is apt to be fragmentary. Nevertheless, his book, while less useful than it might have been, will give many Americans a larger picture of the agencies and the activities of the Federal Government than they have hitherto seen.

International

AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS. Edited for the Council on Foreign Relations by CHARLES P. HOWLAND. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1929.

The second annual volume issued by the Council on Foreign Relations under the editorship of Mr. Charles P. Howland more than fulfils the promise of the first volume of the series, which was published last year. In appearance, in choice of material, in scholarship, and in literary style it is excellent.

Considerably more than half of the present volume is devoted to American interests and policies in the Carribbean. The historical material, dealing as it does with nine different countries, is necessarily sketchy, yet the principal facts are recalled in sufficient detail to serve as an adequate intro-

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*

M. Y., Norman, Oklahoma, asks what novels were written by Carola Oman and by Phoebe Gayne.

CAROLA OMAN writes also under the name of C. Lenanton—being indeed entitled to both names, one by birth, the other by marriage. Under the first she has given the American public as good and as readable a historical novel as I need, setting forth the period and the personality of Richard III in "Crouchback" (Holt); this has been followed by "Miss Barrett's Elopement" (Holt), and before that we had a sympathetic and reliable presentation of a royal personage whose life needs little touching up to make a novel, "Princess Amelia" (Duffield). Her first novel, "Road Royal," was also published by Duffield. As C. Lenanton she wrote a pleasant and clear-sighted novel of present-day mid-summer London, "Holiday" (Appleton), and "Mrs. Newdigate's Window" (Appleton). Phoebe Fenwick Gaye, not Gayne, wrote "Vivandière," which was published last year by Liveright; it was her first novel, and I have taken a special sort of interest in it because the story goes that it was in the course of looking up the details of a costume to wear at a fancy-dress party at the Chelsea Town Hall, just around the corner from my summer headquarters, that she received the impetus to write this highly successful tale of the Napoleonic campaigns.

The Librarian of the Lakewood, Ohio, Public Library tells K. M., Lakewood, Ohio, who recently asked about reference books, that the library of his home town put forth for Book Week a special display of reference books useful in the average home, many of those featured being on the list I recommended. She suggests that the Guide remind its readers that books of this sort are to be found at local libraries, where they will be shown and explained in detail. Here is good advice for the inquirers that ask me so often to decide for them whether to buy the New Standard or the New International dictionary, or to make a similar choice on their behalf. It would be hard to do it on my own; go to the library and see for yourself.

G. W. P., Los Angeles, Cal., asks where one may find out whether any of the political characters in Trollope's parliamentary novels are in any sense sketches of real politicians and statesmen.

ONE may find out almost anything about the novels of Trollope in Michael Sadlier's "Trollope." From this work I learned that "It results from this preoccupation with political society and this indifference to political theory that the two chronicles of Phineas (and the 'Prime Minister' also) can only with difficulty be treated as *romans-à-clef*." By the way, the parliamentary series includes "Can You Forgive Her?," "Phineas Finn," "The Eustace Diamonds," "Prineas Redux," and "The Duke's Children." The set is part of the Uniform Edition of Trollope published by Dodd, Mead; the five novels make seventeen volumes. Everyman's Library, which has had for some time half-a-dozen Trollope volumes, has just added "Phineas Finn" to the number, and it is in this form that I only lately made its acquaintance, to my genuine though belated pleasure.

Daubeny, it appears, is Disraeli, and Turnbull, John Bright; so much Trollope admitted, but would not agree that Lord Chilton is the gentleman who afterward became the eighth Duke of Devonshire or Gresham a blend of Peel and Gladstone. Monk and Plantagenet Palliser appear to be altogether imaginary. It is admitted that Phineas Finn had a double inspiration: physically he was based on Joe Parkinson, a picturesque character of the period, but intellectually and politically he arose from John Pope Hennessey, a protegé of Disraeli. Of all this I had no idea when I read "Phineas"; it goes to show that a key is not needed to get the best good of these novels.

N. D., Watertown, Mass., asks whether Charles Reade wrote, in French, a play entitled "Le Faubourg Saint-Germain," published in 1859.

BEFORE tossing this question to the experts who read this column, I can testify that, though at this time Charles Reade was constantly going back and forth between Paris and London in connection with the copyright laws and matters of stage production, I cannot find either in the "Memoir of Charles Reade," published by Harper in 1887, or in the warm-hearted reminiscences of John Coleman, "Players and Playwrights I Have Known" (Chatto & Windus, 1888), reference to a play of this name written by Reade in French. His debt to French literature he was the first to acknowledge; to "Le Pauvre de Paris" in "Hard Cash"; to "Le Château Grantier" in "White Lies," and to Zola's "L'Assommoir" in "Drink"—but as the debt involved getting the consent of the French author and paying him a fee therefor, it was an honest one.

An amateur portrait in oils of Reade has lately been added to the National Portrait Gallery just around the corner from the National Gallery on Trafalgar Square; it shows him at work, embedded in the opulent clutter of a Victorian drawing-room. It was, however, a comfortable clutter, and his Memoir is crowded and comfortable; with all the "lives" now complicating life for us I rather wonder that the far from usual conditions of the career of the creator of "The Cloister and the Hearth" have not been cooked over for the crowd.

E. K., Philadelphia, Pa., has just read "The Bloody Poet," by Kostolanyi (Macy-Masius), and has quite fallen in love with "that great emperor Nero" as a consequence. Other novels about him are desired.

I FEAR that they will not be so polite to the gentleman. "Quo Vadis?", by Henry Sienkiewicz (Little, Brown), the most popular and the most carefully documented of these, shows him in something other than a heroic light. He does not show up any too well in Seymour Van Santvoord's "Octavia" (Dutton), whose heroine is the lady who became the wife of Nero—a book that keeps as closely as it can to the course of history. He appears in the famous Henty historic, "Beric the Briton" (Scribner), which brings Boadicea into the first part. At least two clergymen have written novels of this period: "Darkness and Dawn," by F. W. Farrar (Longmans, Green), contrasts the social and political life of the old régime with that coming in under the influence of Christianity, and "The Story of Phaedrus," by Newell Dwight Hillis (Macmillan), shows how the Synoptic Gospels were edited. All these are in print in this country; English novels and several American ones out of print may be gathered from Baker's "Guide to Historical Fiction" (Macmillan) and the new edition of "A Guide to the Best Historical Novels and Tales," by Jonathan Nield (Elkin Mathews), first published in 1902 and lately reissued for the fifth time, in an enlarged edition. I notice that it starts off with a quotation from Dr. Canby on the title-page.

L. W. B., Berkeley, California, who asked for the title of a book by Dumas frequently cited in Spanish-American books, is informed by Julio del Toro, assistant professor of Romance Languages at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, that it is "Montevideo, ou une nouvelle Troie," imprimerie centrale de Napoléon Chaix et cie, rue Bergere 20, Paris, 1850. He goes on: "It is said that General Melchor Pacheco y Obes (1810-1855) procured for Dumas the material upon which this book is based. General Pacheco y Obes was in Paris on a mission for the Uruguayan Government around 1849. If your subscriber will write to me and tell me exactly what kind of information about Artigas he is interested in getting, I may be able to help him."

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Conducted by Carl Purington Rollins & Gilbert M. Troxell.

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Elijah and Some Others

ELIJAH. With illustrative drawings by BERTRAM BROOKER. New York: William Edwin Rudge. 1930.

TEN symbolic drawings and a cover design go to make up this picture book. I must confess to a complete incomprehension of religious symbolism as exemplified in this book—but I have been deprived of the book by a clerk in holy orders, and the volume will hereafter repose in a rural rectory in Buckinghamshire. I take it that the pictures mean something, therefore, to those interested in the Old Testament.

The drawing of the ten plates and the cover, and the reproductions in aquatone (offset), are most admirable. There is almost as much of sharpness in the fine lines of the drawings as there would be with wood engraving, although the printing lacks the definite impress on the paper. In technique the drawings are more like metal engraving, and they retain all of the quality of that method in the reproduction. The text, obviously short, as consisting of verses from I Kings, is set in capitals on pages facing the pictures. The whole book shows care in planning and printing.

THE BOOK OF TOBIT AND THE HISTORY OF SUSANNA. Introduction by MONTAGUE JAMES, and four color plates by W. RUSSELL FLINT. London: Haymarket Press (New York: Walter McKee). 1929.

THE Book of Tobit and an introduction by Dr. James make a book of some importance, to which Mr. Flint's pictures, if they had been reproduced in a satisfactory way, would have contributed the last necessary element of value. But there is no good word whatever to be said for the half-tone process for book illustration, and a positive declaration against the use of process color reproductions for original drawings is in order. Mr. Flint's work, when reproduced in a proper medium, as, for instance, in the Eclogues of Vergil, is very lovely; the delicate coloring is too elusive for the half-tone screen, and practically disappears under that cruel treatment.

Dr. James's introduction and the two stories are satisfactorily printed within rule borders, on good paper. Altogether, it would make a satisfactory book, worth shelving as an illustrated edition of two famous tales, *if* the reproductions had been decently done. R.

To Readers & Correspondents

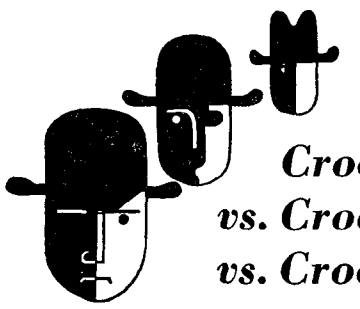
(For this heading, and for the best in whatever follows, it is necessary to thank Mr. Rollins who has, with his customary generosity, allowed the use of an outline manuscript he had prepared for himself.)

IT is perhaps as well to explain at this time what may seem to be, on the part of the conductors of this "column," a certain ungraciousness towards correspondents who ask them for help in the selling of old books. Such questions, of course, demand personal letters in reply, but unfortunately, in the midst of all their other duties, the present writers often fail to have the leisure necessary to make sufficiently detailed answers—with complete freedom from everything else except this particular work, they might be far more successful in the realization of that admirable punctuality they hold before themselves always as an ideal of conduct. It is possible, however, for the benefit of persons who wish to find the best market for their books, to make a series of general statements that, even though they may not fit each individual case perfectly, can be accepted as the attitude of the department towards inquiries of this kind.

Where to sell old books. It is impossible, unless one possesses the mind of a directory, to know the names of all the second-hand book-dealers in this country. As a rule, if the book to be sold is genuinely valuable, it is better to bring it to the attention of dealers in large cities such as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, or San Francisco, as these men know the demand for whatever may be offered, and may at times be able to sell, because of their special opportunities, a book that a local dealer might reject. But if the local bookseller is reliable and intelligent, it is better to consult him first—he is, after all, in a much better position to give advice than any one else. And it must always be remembered that in describing a book in a letter to some one who has not seen the volume, the chief points are: (1) the title-page which ought to be transcribed exactly; and (2) the binding, whether it is original cloth, boards, or leather. The title-page is more important than anything else, unless the book has an association value, such as marginal notes or corrections or presentation inscriptions, in the handwriting of a distinguished former owner.

Current values of books. The current value of any book depends upon the demand for it, *not* upon its age—in other words, the mere fact that an old family possession happens to have been published in 1800 does not mean necessarily that it is in itself worth a large amount. To find out the extent of the present-day demand, one must consult the records of auction sale prices—each year, both in England and in this country, the books sold in this fashion are listed, with brief bibliographical descriptions, and with the prices realized, in a series of volumes called, for the English sales, "Book Prices Current," and for the American, "American Book Prices Current." Both sets are to be found in almost all large libraries, and in many book-shops. As the direct reflection of market conditions, they are invaluable, and serve admirably as guides to values. It should be said, however, that anyone selling directly to a dealer cannot expect to obtain the highest price he has happened to find set down for his property: usually the amount any bookseller is willing to pay is, naturally, rather below the auction price standard.

In this way, first by determining for one's self whether the book to be sold is actually valuable, and then by consulting the nearest reliable bookdealer about the best market for it, an individual can effect for himself a great saving of time, and incidentally, give himself a certain kind of entertainment. The conductors of the "Compleat Collector" are, of course, only too glad to assist their readers whenever it is possible, and their entire idea in outlining a course of action to be followed has merely been another attempt to be useful. Their single suggestion for themselves is that correspondents conform to the general practice of enclosing either addressed envelopes or postal cards in their letters, such enclosures would be an enormous help to them. G. M. T.



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American Art Association Anderson Galleries. February 27: Books from the Library of a Chicago Collector. This collection, made up of the kind of books at present in fashion, includes: presentation copies of two volumes of poems from Elizabeth Barrett Browning to William Wordsworth; a presentation copy of Thomas Hardy's "A Group of Noble Dames"; a fine copy of Dana's "Two Years before the Mast"; Hawthorne's "The Scarlet Letter"; the Kipling "Jungle Books"; a large paper copy of James Russell Lowell's "Poems," 1844; the *first* edition of Charles Reade's "Cloister and the Hearth"; Shelley's copy of Tasso's "Gerusalemma Liberata"; a presentation copy of Bernard Shaw's "Man and Superman"; Dr. Johnson's "Plan of a Dictionary," and the "Dictionary" itself; first editions of Galsworthy, Walter de la Mare, Shaw, and others; and the usual collection of books from the familiar private presses.

G. M. T.

American Art Association Anderson Galleries. February 25-26. Autographs from the libraries of A. W. Tillinghast, of Englewood, N. J., the late Charles Eliot Norton, the late G. W. H. Ritchie, of Providence, R. I., and others. The chief item of interest seems to be a lithograph of an engrossed copy of the Emancipation Proclamation, done in 1864, and autographed by President Lincoln with his full signature. When the lithograph was first published, David W. Cheeseman, the Assistant Treasurer of the United States, asked the President to sign his copy—this is the only specimen of this document that has ever come up at auction. The sale also includes many letters by President Lincoln; one to his aunt contains a careful account of money, while others show him as a judge and as a diplomat. The last pardon signed by him, written on the day of his assassination, is included. There is a large group of documents relating to the conquest of Peru, one of which has the sign manual of Francisco Pizarro, together with several Spanish documents relating to the history and colonization of Florida and California. The remainder of the sale is made up of the secret correspondence in relation to the preliminary Treaty of Peace between the United States and Great Britain in 1872; autograph letters, and documents of the signers of the Declaration.

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Recent utterances by two of the Elder Statesmen in the Higher Councils of the publishing world—MR. J. W. LIPPINCOTT, head of the house that bears his name, and MR. ALFRED MCINTYRE, president of LITTLE BROWN—have been marked by a prophetic fervor rooted in ample wisdom.

The Inner Sanctum is eager to applaud and reiterate their impassioned pleas for drastic reduction in publication schedules, for a program which will make a fact, not a gesture, of the familiar battlecry, "*Fewer and better books.*"

The pristine sacredness and glamour of the printed book—man's conscious bulwark against the ravages of time—is definitely impaired by a wasteful and indiscriminate publishing policy which extols "big lists," relaxes standards of quality and makes a fetish of advance orders, a practice of high pressure and a god of "quantities."

According to the official summaries in the annual survey number of *Publishers Weekly*, listing the output of all firms, *The Inner Sanctum* issued a total of only twenty-seven books in 1929. One house published 736, another 439, and two more than two hundred. Your correspondents published fewer titles than any other firm in America, except the Specialist Publishing Company, credited with a solitary volume.

There is no glory in simply publishing *few* books. Nor is there any enduring satisfaction in scoring a high percentage of best-sellers, either in a small or a large publication schedule. Whatever glory is to be awarded will emanate from the quality of the books. Without comment, therefore, *The Inner Sanctum* merely records a few items from the statistical record of the year:

Out of the twenty-seven books published by *The Inner Sanctum* during 1929, four were officially listed as among the twelve best-selling titles of the year, in general literature:

The Art of Thinking
Believe It or Not
The Cradle of the Deep
The Mansions of Philosophy

Two *Inner Sanctum* books of unquestioned "best-seller" ranking were issued so late in the year that they did not show on the fiscal summary:

Caught Short
Twelve Against the Gods

and in addition three *Cross Word Puzzle Books* (Series 12, 13, and 14) made their habitual appearance on the best-seller roster during the year, without benefit of official tabulation, because they were taken for granted by the trade as non-stop staples.

In the field of fiction, *The Inner Sanctum* showed no best-seller listing on official summary, although *Wolf Solent* was informally accorded this accolade by the trade during the summer of 1929.

Counting only the OFFICIAL best-seller titles listed above, the batting average of *The Inner Sanctum* in non-fiction was .333, and on the combined list for fiction and fact, .166. That is to say, of the twelve best-sellers-of-the-year in fiction for 1929, four were published by *The Inner Sanctum* [without counting *Caught Short*, *Twelve Against the Gods*, and three *Cross Word Puzzle Books*].

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—ESSANDESS.

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WE weren't in the least prepared for it—to have the Phoenician fare forth on a vacation in the dead of winter, we mean. But even as we write he is advancing on London, and we, alas! desolate, sit at his desk and sigh for his fluency. Even *O'Reilly*, that intermittent mouse, our standby during the Phoenician's summer hegiras, is nowhere to be found, though several publicity sheets, gnawed almost beyond recognition lead us to suspect that he has been feasting on forbidden sweets during his master's absence. Certainly he has left us few tidbits of gossip, merely such scraps of information as that there is a Viking invasion of America under way led by *Olav Duun*, the first of whose six-volume saga, "The Trough of the Wave," Alfred A. Knopf *is shortly to publish, and Johan Falkberget*, whose "Lisbeth of Jarnfjeld" the W. W. Norton Company has just issued; that *Aldous Huxley's* last novel, "Point Counter Point," has been dramatized under the title, "This Way to Paradise" (just incidentally we would interject that "Here Is Purgatory" would seem to us a more accurate title), and that the judges of the Longmans, Green Novel Contest have reported that since none of the manuscripts submitted is in their opinion worthy of a prize the Contest on their advice has been extended until April 15, 1930. Now those are what we call sensible judges. Not like that other set of grave and reverend signors who recently awarded the Bok prize for the achievement most conferring glory on Philadelphia during the past year to *Connie Mack*. Well, we ask you—. But that's neither here nor there. . . .

While we're on the subject of prizes we are pleased to announce along with the Stratford Company that the prize of $100 for the best poem printed during the past four months in the *Stratford Magazine* has been awarded to *Louis Guinzberg* for his "Biographical Note." That's one on our associates. They have had a poem of Guinzberg's in their file for months awaiting a chance to print it and now the *Stratford Magazine* has scored on them. . . .

Poets and tardiness remind us that *The Saturday Review* has sinned. We admit it and *Louis Untermeyer* proclaims it. He waited no time at all after he had landed from a six months trip in Europe to call us up and express his indignation that *W. R. B.* should have announced in Round about Parnassus that the *S. R. of L.* (we've been consorting with English *literati* of late and have fallen into the habit of abbreviations) had been reprehensibly neglectful of the work of *Louise Bogan* and *Léonie Adams*. Alas, alas! Even as we printed *W. R. B.'s* statement, Mr. Untermeyer's eulogistic reviews of the latest volumes of poetry by these ladies, sent in long before the release date, lay peacefully slumbering in our files. Again we cry, "Peccavi." "'Tis true, and pity 'tis, 'tis true." . . .

Mr. Untermeyer, incidentally, has launched upon a new enterprise. He is importing into America two little Sicilian donkeys (the little, of course, is mere redundancy to anyone who has seen them) which he is shipping to his "estate" in the Adirondacks whence eventually he intends to "donkeyize" America. Democrats take notice! Donkeys for campaign processions, for headquarters mascots, for all necessary political purposes, warranted docile and accustomed by inheritance to hauling great loads will henceforth be available. . . .

But we wander from literature. . . .

Erich Maria Remarque, whose "All Quiet on the Western Front" still keeps on selling, is now writing a book describing the life of a soldier after the war. It may be finished early in the summer, and when it is ready will be translated into English by *A. G. Wheen* whose rendition of the earlier book was so happy. Mr. Wheen, by the way, has translated "Four Infantrymen," from the German of *Ernst Johannsen* for the new publisher, Alfred King. It will be issued at the end of March. In the meanwhile you can read "Retreat," by *C. R. Benstead*, which the Century Company has just issued, and which has already stirred up in England, along with all the praise that has been bestowed upon it by the critics, a storm of protest from those who object to its picture of a British army chaplain. Or you can read (at least you can when it is published by Putnams sometime in May) that other war book which is enjoying a remarkable press in England, "Her Privates We." *Mr. George Palmer Putnam*, whom we met the other day at the tea he was giving for the youthful English novelist, *Mollie Panter-Downes*, tells us that the utmost mystery surrounds the identity of its author. Mr. Putnam, when he lunched with him in London, knew and addressed him only as "Mr. Private." His book, which is to be published here under the title "Holocaust," is to be ascribed in this country as in England to *Private* 19022. We like it's opening sentence: "The darkness was increasing rapidly, as the whole sky had clouded, and threatened thunder." But no, we mustn't go on; just because we happen to have been intrusted with an English copy of the book is no reason for anticipating the American release date. . . .

Talking of as yet unpublished works, there's a novel we'd like to advise you to read when it becomes available. That's "Gallows' Orchard," by *Claire Spencer*, whose husband, Harrison Smith, is to publish it. The book has a masculine forthrightness of narrative in combination with a feminine delicacy of intuition; it moves forward with economy of incident to the tragic end which is foreordained by the personality of its heroine, and it escapes all touch of sentimentality even while relieving its grimness with occasional almost lyrical passages of sentiment. It is a tale that dwells in the memory. . . .

If you haven't done so already, you should read *H. M. Tomlinson's* "All Our Yesterdays." There's a book born of a brooding heart and mind, gentle and terrible, written with a suppleness and beauty of style which few but Tomlinson achieve today, and reflecting in every part the author's profound concern with "the doubtful fate of human kind." Not a good novel if measured by the ordinary canons of fiction, it is one of the most distinguished works to have come from the press in recent months. . . .

Incidentally, Mr. Tomlinson is in this country at the present writing. We met him the other night at what Mr. Weller might have denominated a "swarry," listening with courteous gravity to the talk of humanism and the humanists that eddied about him, and smiling indulgently as Mr. *Don Marquis* announced, "Now if my old creation, Hermione, were to appear among us this moment she would agree that 'the higher immediacy' is the proper gospel," and so on until his words were drowned in a burst of laughter. *Rose Macaulay* came in on the crest of it, an author notable not only for successful novels but for the fact that she was sailing from America after allotting only two days of her sojourn in the country to New York. . . .

But again we wander. Not persons but books we should be describing. Harpers are announcing a new volume of poems by *Leonard Bacon*, "Lost Buffalo." Mr. Bacon is the only author we know who, when asked for a review, cables back from a villa near Fiesoli: "Must take time to make up my mind. Will cable when I do." We've made up our own mind about his poetry long ago. It's good. . . .

The Yale University Press recently issued a charmingly made little volume, written by *Josephine Gibson Knowlton*, entitled "Roma." The booklet recounts the story of an Italian sparrow which won its way into the heart and home of the author during one of his visits to Rome. It is illustrated by *Charles Dana Gibson*.

Following the lead of *Seward Collins* in the *Bookman*, *Granville Hicks* in the *Nation* has now burst into a couple of pages concerning "The 'Twenties in American Literature." Retrospect seems certainly to be handled in a most melancholy manner. It seems that all the great heroes and geniuses of not so few years ago were a pretty punk bunch after all. Most of the ballyhoo concerning them was misdirected. Which makes us wonder where the belauded top-liners of 1930 are going to be in a 1940 survey. Drag 'em out every ten years, or they'll only clutter up the arena! . . .

Well, well. We believe, though we are not certain, that the first of the Phoenician's bulletins from England will arrive in time to fill the Nest next week. Here's hoping!

THE SUBSTITUTE PHOENICIAN.

The AMEN CORNER

There has just come to our desk the Oxford Spring List of books wet off the press. And most welcome it is too, coming as it does in the midst of enquiries about new publications. The catalogue itself is lovely and interesting because it is set in Baskerville type, a type very little used indeed. William Rudge is doing the Isham Letters in it. But its beauty is generally unfamiliar.

The list begins very aptly with Robert Bridges's *The Testament of Beauty*,[1] that giant poem about man and man's amazing world. Having only just finished this magnificent work we are glad to find listed Bridges's complete poetry in six uniform volumes[2] and in *New Verse*[3] and *October*.[4] The English laureate has been little known here except among poets because his books were not published here. But now we can read in full a poet who has inspired Amy Lowell and other Americans with a love of poetic adventure.

The Poems of John Donne[5] follows, and we recommend this one volume edition to those with a taste for mystical verse and beautiful typography. (Incidentally it is the cheapest edition you can buy.) Charles William's *Poetry at Present*[6] will offer in prose and verse an analysis of T. S. Eliot,[7] Robert Graves, W. H. Davies, the Sitwells, A. E. Housman and many other contemporaries, which is no less profound for being gay and trenchant. **A Max Beerbohm** portrait-caricature will be used as a frontispiece.

And E. I. Fripp again[8] recreates the life of Elizabethan towns in *Elizabethan Studies*,[9] If you enjoy Shakespeare[10] and have not yet read Fripp you are robbing yourself of rare delights.

If beauty of type and illustration warm your enthusiasms, you will want all three of these inexpensive items: *Winter: A Poem*[11] by James Thompson, *The Poems of Sidney Godolphin*[12] (introduction by John Drinkwater) and *Regula S. Benedicti*,[13] including five reproductions of early English calligraphy, the most ancient copy of a document of prime importance in the history of religion and learning.

Among the biographies is *Marlowe and his Circle*,[14] by F. S. Boas, a really thrilling account of that mysterious Elizabethan which we spoke of in a recent column. *The Diary of a Country Parson*,[15] Vol. IV, 1793-1796, edited by John Beresford, is well known in England and America as "that incomparable diary," charming, placid and variegated, never heavy. Through it runs **the full stream of country life.** Volume V, the last volume, is promised in September. These books are well worth your investment.

A civilizing list in general, it discusses histories of civilizations in one section. These are timely titles and food for international thought. *What is European Civilization, and what is its Future?*,[16] *A History of Iberian Civilization*,[17] *Liberty and Despotism in Spanish America*,[18] by Cecil Jane. *The World Crisis* 1914-1918,[19] discussed by Elie Halévy, points to causes and effects of the War in our social and international relations.

General Smuts, in *Africa and Some World Problems*,[20] talks of Africa's future, World Peace and the League. Those who could not hear his recent American lectures will do well to read these. *The League Council in Action*,[21] by T. P. Conwell-Evans continues the same theme from the point of view of the organization and the work it has accomplished.

If you would let your imagination spread its wings, read *Modern Cosmologies*,[22] by H. Macpherson. If the title scares you ignore it and soar into starry space with this interesting guide. On the way he will recount to you the story of man's expanding vision of the size and proportions of the universe from the myths of the sun-gods, and the astrologies of Nineveh to our observations today that show our solar-system as a small spiral among 2,000,000 systems.

Dear, dear, we thought we could give you an idea of the Oxford Spring List! You had best write for the complete list,[23] for we have mentioned only a few random titles, omitting excellent books on Art, History, Belles Lettres, Drama, Religion, Philosophy, Music, Reference, Science and six gay books for boys and girls.[24]

—THE OXONIAN

(1) $3.50; Limited Ed. by Wm. Rudge. $25.00. (2) Each $2.25. (3) $2.00. (4) $2.00. (5) $2.50. (6) $3.00. (7) See Tradition and Experiment in Present-day Literature, $2.50. (8) Shakespeare's Stratford, $1.50; Shakespeare's Haunts Near Stratford, $2.25. (9) $2.25. (10) 1 Vol. Ed., $2.25. (11) Type Facsimile Ed., $2.50. (12) Tudor and Stuart Library Ed., $3.50. (13) $2.50. (14) $2.50. (15) Each Vol., $4.25. (16) $1.00. (17) $5.00. (18) $4.00. (19) $2.00. (20) $2.50. (21) $4.50. (22) $2.75. (23) Send name and address to Oxford University Press, 114 5th Ave., N. Y. C. (24) Send for special catalogue.

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The New Books

(*Continued from page 762*)

duction to the discussion of our Caribbean policy and activities.

This discussion is of superlative merit. The arguments for and against our Carribbean policy are analyzed and weighed with a meticulous care which seems to bring the atmosphere of the scientific laboratory into a discussion of international politics. It might well be prescribed that no American should ever again speak or write on the activities of the United States in the Caribbean without having read this chapter. Officials should be required to read it twice—at least.

The second section of the book deals with the World Court and the Pact of Paris. The material here is largely a record of developments and there is little room for controversial discussion.

The remainder of the volume is devoted to immigration. This again is largely historical material. The final chapter is entitled "International Implications." At the end of its two pages comes the first disappointment of the book. For it breaks off with merely a brief introduction to the subject. It is gratifying to know that it is planned to include more material on immigration in the 1930 volume. If Mr. Howland and his associates will give us an analysis of the international implications of immigration which shall be at all comparable to their analysis of Carribbean affairs they will place students of international relations still more deeply in their debt.

RED STAR IN SAMARKAND. By ANNA LOUISE STRING. Coward, McCann. 1929. $3.50.

Under the Czars, Tashkent was the chief city of Turkestan, but after the revolution power returned to ancient Samarkand, and now, under the red star of Bolshevism, it is the capital of the Uzbek republic. Anna Louise Strong writes with understanding of the policy of the Soviet Government in this rich outpost of Russia. As a social experiment, the natives of the provinces rather than Russians are being placed in administrative positions, with the object of creating a friendly bond that will be of mutual advantage to both state and province. The president of the Uzbecs is a former farm laborer, simple and kindly, yet having a great hold over his people who are still amazed to see a man like themselves grown ruler. He is carrying out faithfully the communist ideal, organizing the peasants into coöperatives and dividing the land among those who use it. Twelve years after the revolution land reform is just coming to the country.

For until recently, Turkestan was a thorn in the side of the Bolsheviks. The "Holy War," fomented by Enver Pasha, centered there, and continued sporadically until 1926. This was one of the most persistent of the armed attacks on the Soviet Union, and there are echoes of it still, now that the country is settled, in occasional murders of unveiled women and young communists in remote villages.

The author describes the modern developments, the activities of the Cotton Committee of Central Asia, the fight for the freedom of women, the progress of education, the dramatic struggle in the administration of justice, where new land and ancient custom conflict sharply, etc.

The face of Turkestan is turned towards progress. The old sluggish life has gone forever, and through many channels knowledge pours in of the things the world outside can offer and of what men may desire. Radio in particular, first looked on as black magic, is working miracles. The results now are crude enough, but a new existence has definitely come to this land of Genghiz Khan and Tamerlane.

Miscellaneous

BEATING THE STOCK MARKET. By *R. W. McNeel*. Duffield. $1.

MASS EDUCATION IN ENGLAND. By *J. H. Garrett*. London: Burrow.

FOUNDATIONS OF GEOMETRY AND INDUCTION. By *Jean Nicod*. Harcourt, Brace. $5.

Poetry

THE HERMIT THRUSH. By KATHLEEN MILLAY. Liveright. 1929. $2.

Kathleen Millay has, like her sister, an ease, a fluency, which equips her as a fashioner of lyrics; she has also an archness, a self-conscious "cuteness," which, at one time, threatened to spoil the gift of the author who wrote "A Few Figs from Thistles." But the Millay of "Elegy" and "God's World" and "On Hearing a Symphony of Beethoven" and "Justice Denied in Massachusetts" is never evoked in the pages of "The Hermit Thrush." It is true that Kathleen Millay has written six poems under the general heading of "Sacco and Vanzetti," but a comparison of these with the one bitter outcry in "The Buck in the Snow" is almost as unfortunate as a pairing of the authors' names.

Why pair them then? Were the volume signed with a less glamorous patronymic, what would be left? A pleasant voice, singing about gardens and hurt hearts and Isadora Duncan and the wind in the grass and the poor little goat down in Glengarriff Bay and Persephone and herself, with production easy and of little variety. It is never for a moment profound, never distinctive in tone or treatment, never (Archibald MacLeish, forgive us for the word!) "poignant." Never, at least, to this crabbed reviewer.

The conclusion, it seems, is sad but inevitable. This is not, as Dr. Nat Ferber has written, the "loveliest of America's poets." This is merely another one of the hundreds of facile young women who are weak sisters of a strong poet. Kathleen Millay differs from the others only because she has a blood-right to the name.

THE OVERLAND TRAIL. By AGNES C. LAUT. Stokes. 1929. $3.50.

Miss Laut's volume on the Oregon Trail, the second to appear within a year, differs from Mr. W. J. Ghent's in being journalistic rather than historical. She possesses a large fund of historical information, it is true. Her narrative is enlivened with a generous amount of anecdote and fact drawn from the annals of the explorers, fur-traders, Indian fighters, and early Oregon settlers. But she does not marshal her information in systematic form, nor is it either as full or as precise as formal history would demand. What she offers us instead is rather a travelogue. Beginning at Kansas City and Leavenworth, she conducts the reader along the famous trail, pausing at intervals to tell us of early travel along the Platte, of Fort Kearney, of South Pass, of Jim Bridger and his post, of Fort Hall and the fur men, of Walla Walla and Marcus Whitman, of the gallant Dr. John McLaughlin and his trading-station, of Astoria and much more. Mingled with this are enthusiastic descriptions of the country as it appears to-day, facts upon its wheat production, hotels, and salmon fisheries, and roseate predictions of the future of the whole Oregon region, including the "inland empire."

In short, Miss Laut has furnished us a superior kind of guide book. While often carelessly written and confused in arrangement, it is continuously entertaining. Indeed, the rich welter of the contents, and the author's brisk way of leaping from topic to topic, add to its value as light reading. On one page we are with the French voyageurs, on the next with General Dodge and the Union Pacific railway builders; on a third with the Mormons and General Custer; on a fourth with methods of wheat culture near Walla Walla and a description of a new hotel in Spokane. Not all of its history nor all of its data on present-day conditions is critical in tone. Miss Laut declines giving an account of Portland because she has never known a Pacific Coast city which did not "double its wildest guesses of future population in twenty years." She is equally lyrical over the destiny of Spokane and the adventurous career of certain early pioneers. She even takes us back to "the most epic era in all earth's history," when the Coast Ranges were spouting volcanoes and mastodons and sabre-tooth tigers roamed the Great Basin. As guide books to the Far West should be, it is filled to the brim with enthusiasm.

The Wit's Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

Competition No. 79. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best verses "To Julia (1930), Not to bob her hair," in the manner of Herrick. (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of February 25.)

Competition No. 80. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best short rhymed poem called "Country Auction." (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of March 11.)

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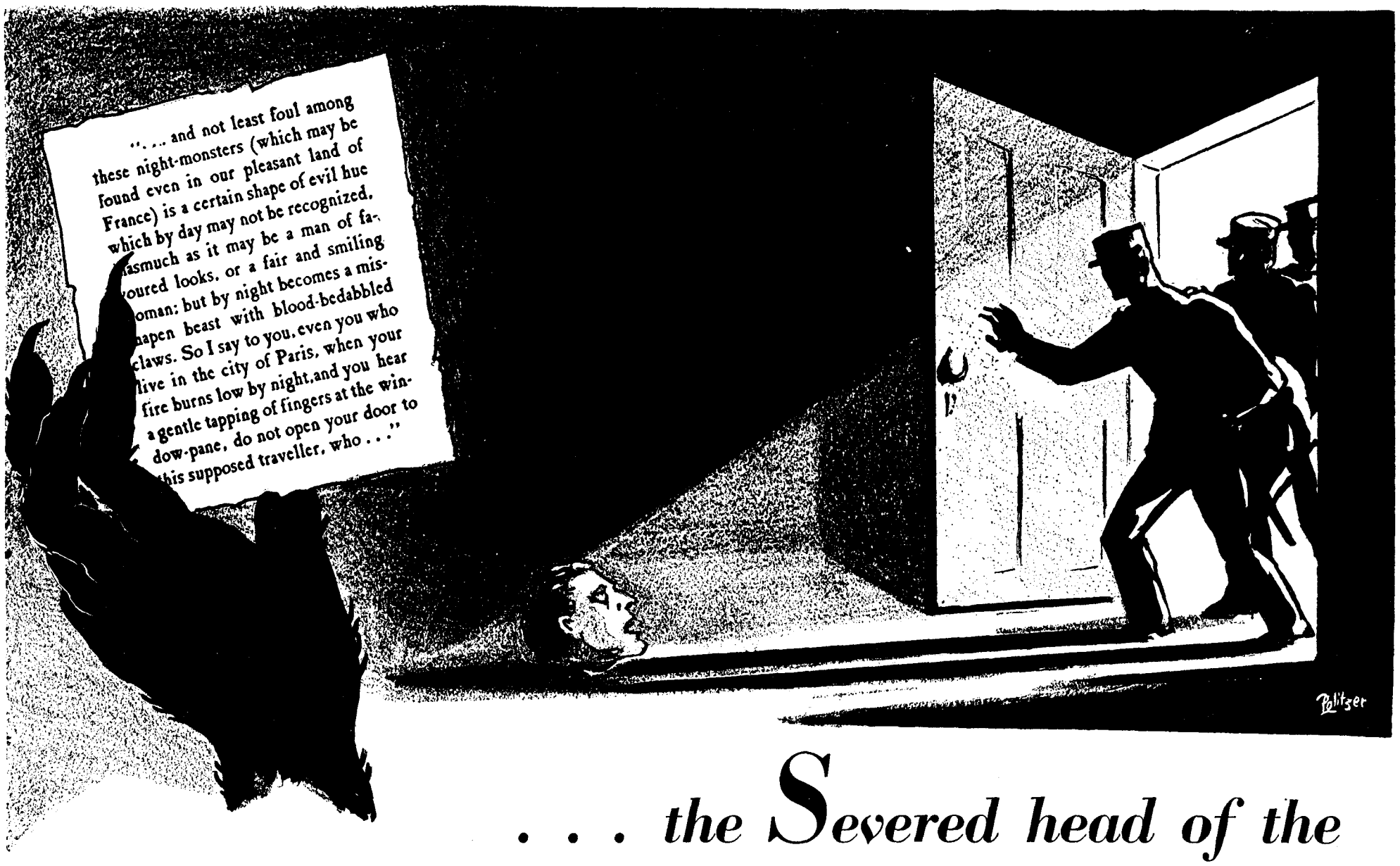
". . . and not least foul among
these night-monsters (which may be
found even in our pleasant land of
France) is a certain shape of evil hue
which by day may not be recognized,
inasmuch as it may be a man of fa-
voured looks, or a fair and smiling
woman; but by night becomes a mis-
shapen beast with blood-bedabbled
claws. So I say to you, even you who
live in the city of Paris, when your
fire burns low by night, and you hear
a gentle tapping of fingers at the win-
dow-pane, do not open your door to
this supposed traveller, who . . ."
Pollitzer

. . . the Severed head of the Duc de Seligny stared at them from the floor

ALONE, he had entered the empty card room of the smart Paris gambling house. Both doors had been watched by the police. The only window had not been entered. *There were no secret passageways.* Yet ten minutes later when the police burst in the Duc de Seligny was dead and the murderer had disappeared. So begins a mystery story as weird and fascinating as any ever contrived by Poe.

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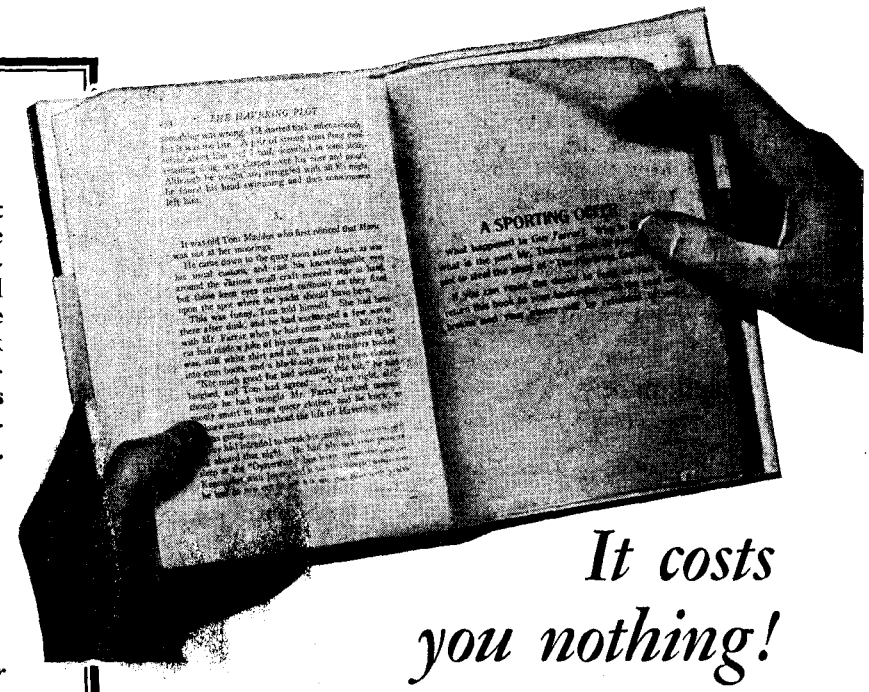

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